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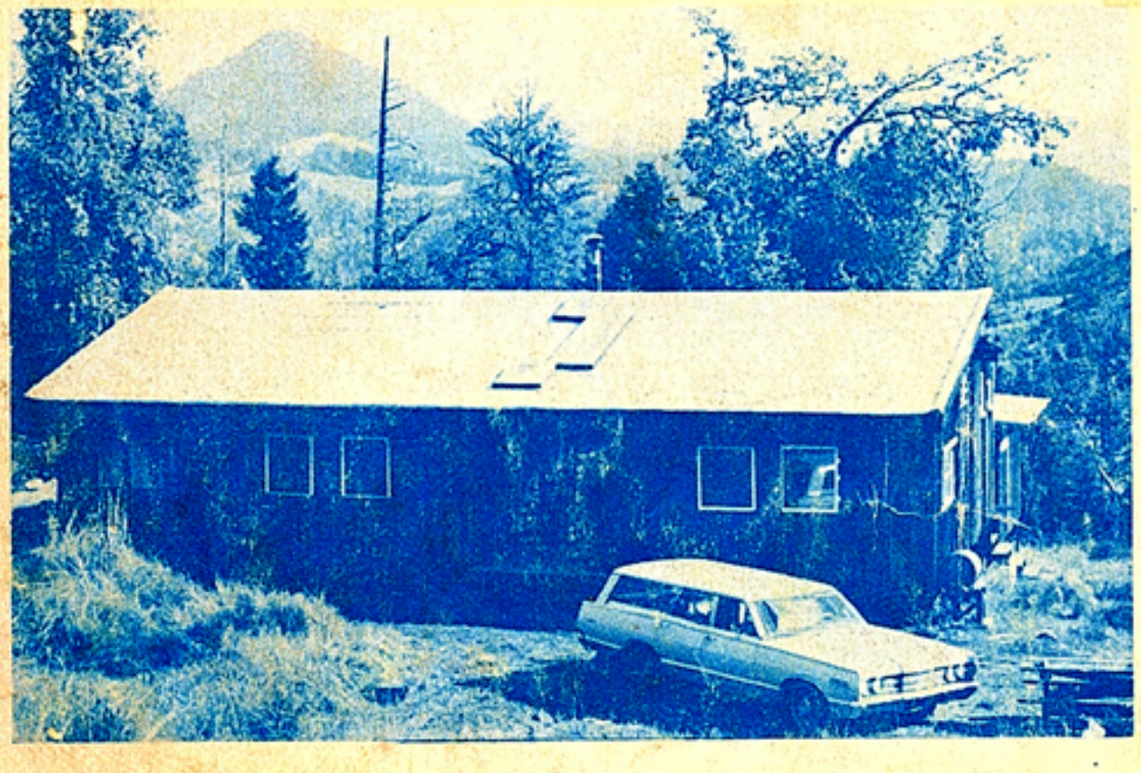
Prana Yoga Ashram
488 Spruce Street
Berkeley, California
94708 U.S.A.
Phone (415) 524-6471

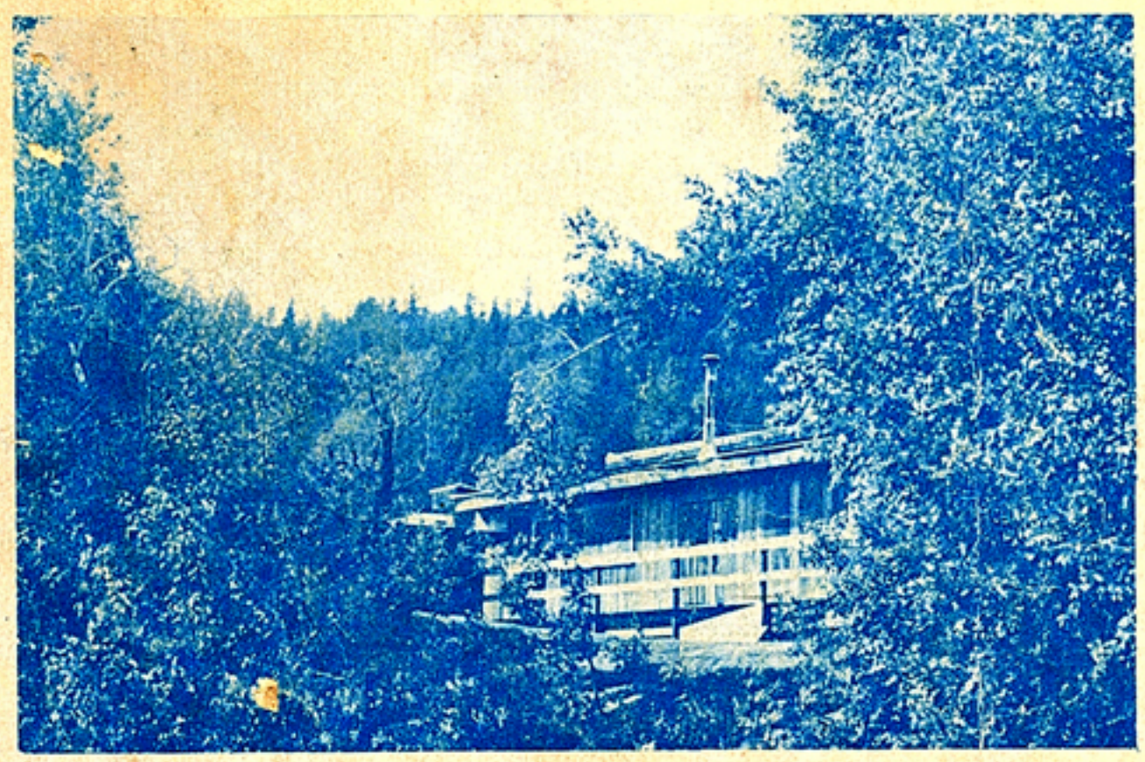
CALIF.(40) OAKLAND

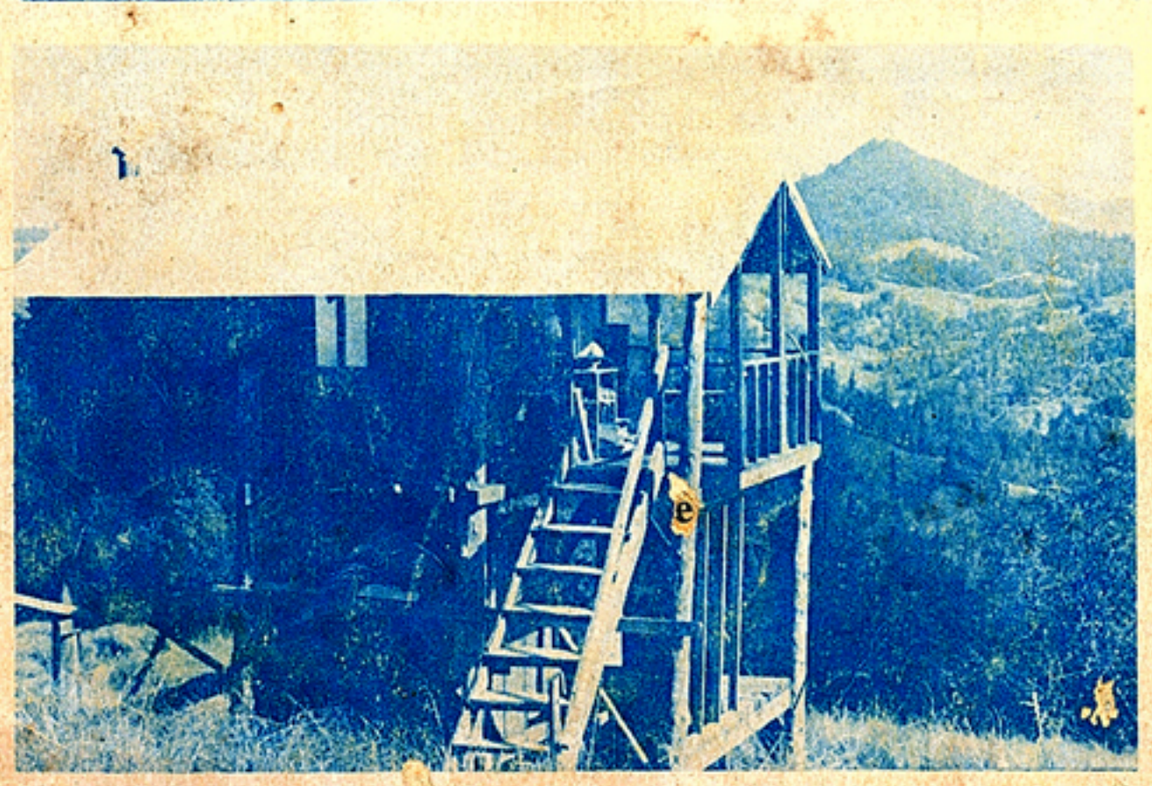
# PRANA YOGA LIFE

AUM ॐ SAKTHI GOD

AYODHYANAGAR







## PRANA YOGA RETREAT

under the guidance of

**SWAMI SIVALINGAM**

FOUNDER-DIRECTOR OF PRANA YOGA CENTRES INTERNATIONAL

- YOGA TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM
- SUMMER YOGA CAMP
- OUTDOOR COMMUNITY LIVING

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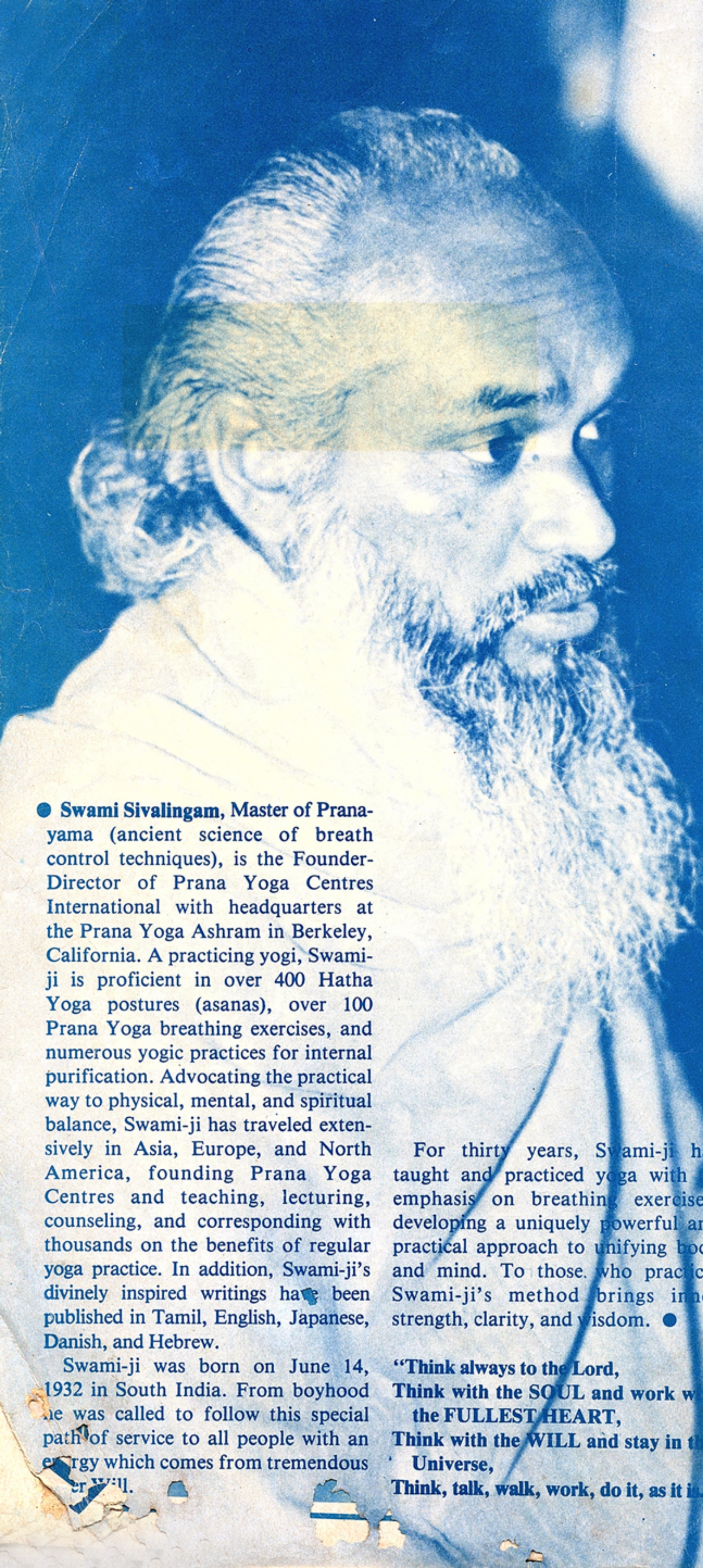

● **Swami Sivalingam,** Master of Prana-yama (ancient science of breath control techniques), is the Founder-Director of Prana Yoga Centres International with headquarters at the Prana Yoga Ashram in Berkeley, California. A practicing yogi, Swami-ji is proficient in over 400 Hatha Yoga postures (asanas), over 100 Prana Yoga breathing exercises, and numerous yogic practices for internal purification. Advocating the practical way to physical, mental, and spiritual balance, Swami-ji has traveled extensively in Asia, Europe, and North America, founding Prana Yoga Centres and teaching, lecturing, counseling, and corresponding with thousands on the benefits of regular yoga practice. In addition, Swami-ji's divinely inspired writings have been published in Tamil, English, Japanese, Danish, and Hebrew.

Swami-ji was born on June 14, 1932 in South India. From boyhood he was called to follow this special path of service to all people with an energy which comes from tremendous inner Will.

For thirty years, Swami-ji has taught and practiced yoga with emphasis on breathing exercises, developing a uniquely powerful and practical approach to unifying body and mind. To those who practice, Swami-ji's method brings inner strength, clarity, and wisdom. ●

**"Think always to the Lord,**
**Think with the SOUL and work with the FULLEST HEART,**
**Think with the WILL and stay in this Universe,**
**Think, talk, walk, work, do it, as it is."**

## THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

**O Adorable Lord of Mercy and Love!**
**Salutations and prostrations unto Thee.**
**Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient.**
**Thou art Existence-Consciousness- Bliss Absolute.**
**Thou art the Indweller of all beings.**

**Grant us an understanding heart,**
**Equal vision, balanced mind,**
**Faith, devotion and wisdom.**
**Grant us inner spiritual strength**
**To resist temptations and to control the mind,**
**Free us from egoism, lust, greed, hatred, anger, and jealousy.**
**Fill our hearts with divine virtues.**

**Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms.**
**Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms.**
**Let us ever remember Thee.**
**Let us ever sing Thy glories.**
**Let thy Name be ever on our lips.**
**Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever.**

**— SWAMI SIVANANDA**

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Berkeley:
California:
28-03-78 A.

Bless Self:
Divine life & love within you,
so more divine practicals & gain the
supreme love of the experiences,
Awake, Arise, and look with-In;
Inner Practicals is an great help of the Lord,
Self understanding is an great development
of the divine knowledge;
Practical way to clear of the negativities
& lazy & crazyness;
Naked mind knows the true Practicals
& its aims & objects.
Follow The one goal of divine Practicals &
establish The self Knowledge;
with Prem & Joy
Sincerely.

# Letters to the Aspirants

Swami Sivalingam

## Faith

Practice regular spiritual path,
Practice regular the divine words,
Practical only uplifts for anytime and elsewhere, for who suffers un-happy moods,
Divine work always gives great divine understandings,
Divine manners always give great divine spirits,
Watch and moderate with-in, and the WILL appears by the grace of the spiritual strength,
Experiences come by controlling the senses,
Experiences come by the way to know inner activities,
Watch inwards, eat for knowing inwards, work for knowing inwards, everything for knowing inwards,
Happy and un-happy are the same,
Healthy and un-healthy are the same,
Health means un-thoughts,
Happy means non-comparements with some ones,
Sufferings mean, thinking of the futures and the pasts,
Sufferings and health, happy all by the same one place,
WILL teaches great, who knows the mind,
WILL gives prosper, who knows one's reality of the life,
Watching oneself is a great helping others,
Watching the breath means helping the nations,
Watching the thoughts means rendering services for the humanity in sake of HIM. •

## Clearing

Eat proper food, when you hunger,
Eat proper diet, when you feel,
Drink plenty of cold water, for cleansing the internal,
Walk straight by your spine,
Talk always steadily and properly,
Cultivate for practices at least 20 minutes in mornings,
Repeat the Lord's mantra which helps you and gives great joy with divine love,
Avoid over talking and unpleasantness,
Avoid over thinking and sickness,
Sit straightly which is very important for the spine,
Clear thoughts give clear internal,
Clear food gives clear thoughts,
Clear knowing gives clear motion,
Clear exercises give great happiness, beauty and flexibility,
Clear thinking gives clear memory,
Clear work gives clear eyes. •

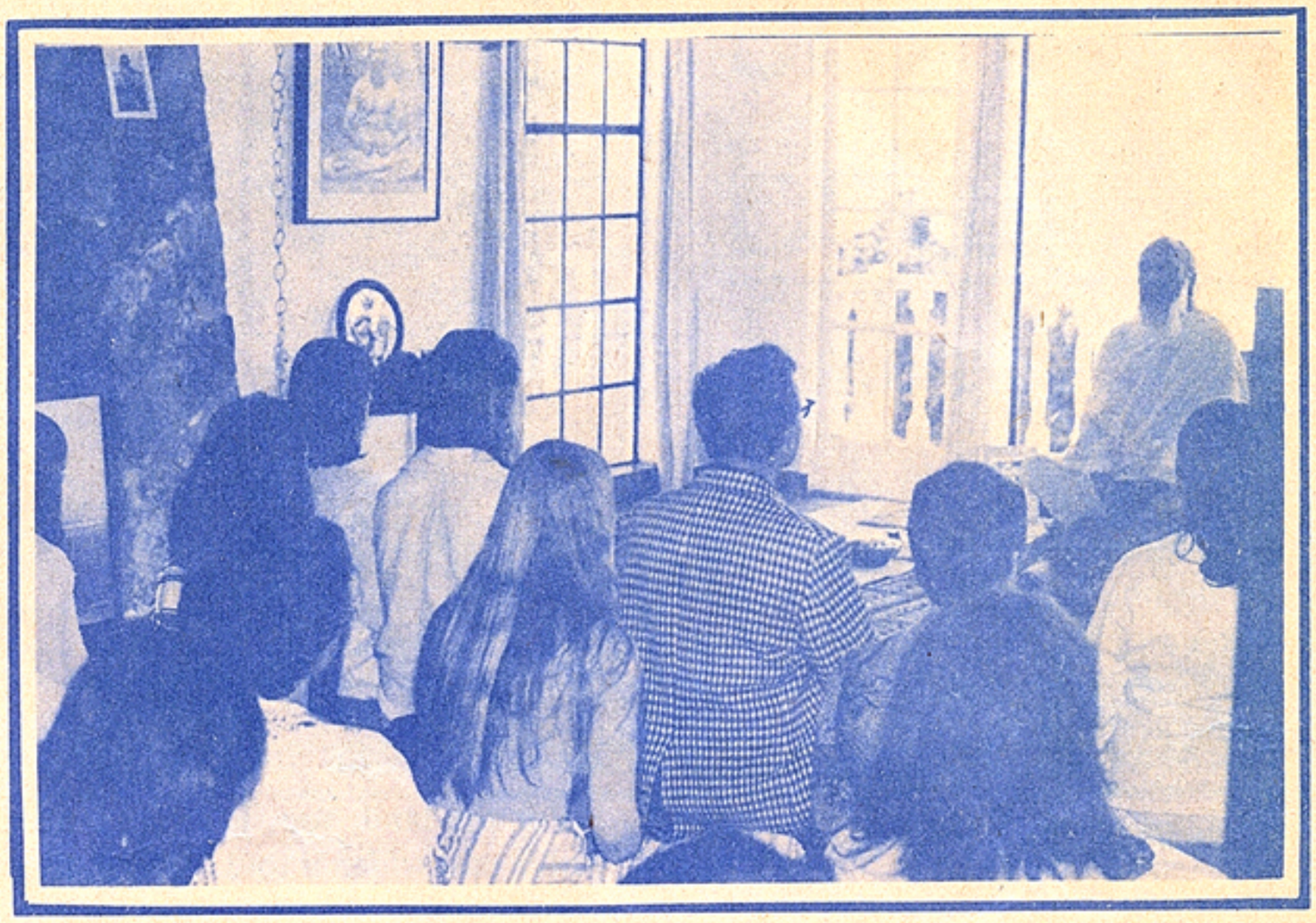
## Experiences

Develop the Divine power which is lying bottom of the controlling the mind,
Develop the Spirit of the Will which is lying bottom of the Divine Truth from the Knowing the Innerity.
Develop the Peace of the Trust, lying bottom of the Faith from the Knowing of the bearings,
Develop the Clarity of the Divine Love which is lying bottom of the Touching Heart to Heart, which is lying bottom of the controlling the emotionals,
Develop the Power of the Astral from the Practical way to find with-in the Experiences, which give great Freedom and fearlessness to walk another world,
Divine Love and my Soul always with-in you ALL, which gives great joy, peace, progress and everlasting Inner peace and its modifications. •

## Inner Path

The breath gone, then life also gone,
The breath is good, then the thoughts and life also good;
The breath is a greatest knowledge of the human's life;
The breath is a greatest Drama of one's life;
The breath is a greatest Karma of one's life;
The breath is a greatest good, bad of the one's life's actions;
How is the breath; as the way acting the human,
How is the breath; as the same way acting the one's life and sufferings with weakness of lost of life;
Unstrong breath; unstrong life with sufferings many.
Watch your breath; then mind and body will progress;
Watch your breath; then the life goes to the Lord of Lord,
Watch the breath; then there is none of suffering and sickness of Physical and Mental;
Do for the breath and watch the breath;
Breath always nostril and gain the Inner Power;
Breath always through the nostrils and be giant for the Knowing Inwards;
Breath is life, life belongs to the breath,
Breath is life force, life force current with the thoughts of the breath.
Deep breath always gives great True Knowledge;
Deep breath gives great Know Thy Self.
Deep breath clearing the sickness of the lungs;
Deep lung gives great True Knowledge,
Deep lung gives great wide Heart.
Wide Heart and deep lungs are great Soul,
Lord with the Soul, Soul with the Man, find the both with Spiritual Practical way.,
Thoughtless work, God always gives great Positive Progress;
Thoughtless work, God always watching and grants to enter His house.
Divine house is a great thousand petals of Padma's residence. •

# Initiation Ceremony



Sunday, September 25, 1977, marked the first initiation ceremony held since Swami Sivalingam's return to the United States from Canada. More than two dozen devotees from northern and southern California gathered at the Prana Yoga Ashram in Berkeley (as pictured here).

Beginning at 9:30 in the morning, the sacred fire ceremony was highlighted by Swami-ji's special Sanskrit chanting of holy mantras and the names of gods and goddesses.

In an atmosphere filled with health, joy, and positive feelings, the receiving of a name and mantra was a moving experience for each devotee. The bestowing of a name and mantra by the guru to disciple is a sacred tradition going back thousands of years. Through the guru's direct blessing, the devotee accepts the divine guidance of the guru—and begins a new way of living and thinking about the self and the world. ●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*The Divine Life Society:*

# TWENTY IMPORTANT SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS

BY

**H.H. Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati (Himalayas)**

1. Get up at 4 a.m. daily. This is Brahmamuhurta which is extremely favourable for meditation on God.

2. ASANA: Sit on Padma, Siddha or Sukha Asana for Japa and meditation for half an hour, facing the east or the north. Increase the period gradually to three hours. Do Sirshasana and Sarvangasana for keeping up Brahmacharya and health. Take light physical exercises as walking, etc., regularly. Do twenty Pranayamas.

3. JAPA: Repeat any Mantra as pure Om or Om Namo Narayanaya, Om Namah Sivaya, Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya, Om Saravanabhavaya Namah, Sita Ram, Sri Ram, Hari Om, or Gayatri, according to your taste or inclination, from 108 to 21,600 times daily.

4. DIETETIC DISCIPLINE: Take Sattvic food, Suddha Ahara. Give up chillies, tamarind, garlic, onion, sour articles, oil, mustard, asafoetida. Observe moderation in diet (Mitahara). Do not overload the stomach. Give up those things which the mind likes best for a fortnight in a year. Eat simple food. Milk and fruits help concentration. Take food as medicine to keep the life going. Eating for enjoyment is sin. Give up salt and sugar for a month. You must be able to live on rice, Dhal and bread without any chutni. Do not ask for extra salt for Dhal and sugar for tea, coffee or milk.

5. Have a separate meditation-room under lock and key.

6. Do charity regularly, every month, or even daily, according to your means, say six paisa per rupee.

7. SVADHYAYA: Study systematically the Gita, Ramayana, Bhagavata, Vishnu-Sahasranama, Lalita-Sahasranama, Aditya Hridaya, Upanishads or Yoga Vasishtha, the Bible, Zend Avesta, the Koran, the Tripitakas, the Granth Sahib, etc., from half an hour to one hour daily and have Suddha Vichara.

8. Preserve the vital force (Veerya) very, very carefully. Veerya is God in motion or manifestation—Vibhuti. Veerya is all power. Veerya is all money. Veerya is the essence of life, thought and intelligence.

9. Get by heart some prayer-Slokas, Stotras and repeat them as soon as you sit in the Asana before starting Japa or meditation. This will elevate the mind quickly.

10. Have Satsanga. Give up bad company, smoking, meat and alcoholic liquors entirely. Do not develop any evil habits.

11. Fast on Ekadasi or live on milk and fruits only.

12. Have a Japa Mala (rosary) round your neck or in your pocket or underneath your pillow at night.

13. Observe Mowna (vow of silence) for a couple of hours daily.

14. Speak the truth at all cost. Speak a little. Speak sweetly.

15. Reduce your wants. If you have four shirts, reduce the number to three or two. Lead a happy, contented life. Avoid unnecessary worry. Have plain living and high thinking.

16. Never hurt anybody (Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah). Control anger by love, Kshama (forgiveness) and Daya (compassion).

17. Do not depend upon servants. Self-reliance is the highest of all virtues.

18. Think of the mistakes you have committed during the course of the day, just before retiring to bed (self-analysis). Keep daily diary and self-correction register. Do not brood over past mistakes.

19. Remember that death is awaiting you at every moment. Never fail to fulfil your duties. Have pure conduct (Sadachara).

20. Think of God as soon as you wake up and just before you go to sleep. Surrender yourself completely to God (Saranagati).

OM Shantih! Shantih! Shantih!

THIS IS THE ESSENCE OF ALL SPIRITUAL SADHANAS. THIS WILL LEAD YOU TO MOKSHA. ALL THESE NIYAMAS OR SPIRITUAL CANONS MUST BE RIGIDLY OBSERVED. YOU MUST NOT GIVE LENIENCY TO THE MIND.

*Note: Kindly frame this and keep in a prominent place in the house. Read this daily.*

**Printed at the Y.V.F.A. Press, P.O. Shivanandanagar, U.P.**

# Messenger and His Message

T.S. Kalyanasundaram
Yogasana Alayam
Madras - INDIA

Guru is like a messenger or apostle of God. He brings to one the Divine message from Divine power to be transferred at a particular time and place.

It is said in Hindu philosophy that only with initiation by a spiritual Guru—the messenger of God—and with concentrated devotion can one subtly feel the Divine presence in the Soul. The ordinary physical eye cannot see the Divine. The inner eye alone can subtly feel the Divine presence. The first step is mental purification and concentrated devotion. It is for that the spiritual Guru initiates his true disciple. One seeks the guidance of a Spiritual Guru—the messenger of God—who is in the position to put an aspirant on the right track, mentioning what to assimilate and how to snap the cordly bondage.

The mind of an individual is constantly subject to two powerful influences. On the one hand, he is lured by baser instincts which involve him in committing misdeeds, resulting in his treading the path of vice. On the other hand, by Divine Grace, he may choose the company of Saintly souls, God's representatives, whose teachings will enable him to devote his entire attention to God and the practice of Dharma. The spiritual Guru—the messenger of God—will prescribe for him the simplest recipe to visualise God through Mantras and meditation. By following the methods taught by the Spiritual Guru, the individual will get into the pious life and will be able to overcome lust, anger, malice, avarice, egotism, and jealousy—the six strong forces which corrupt him. One can escape the six main evils by developing oneself through the chief remedy—the Mantras and meditation. This habit, however, should be cultivated at an opportune time, a formative period, for when one becomes old, his failing faculties will refuse to obey his wishes.

**Japa is a training by which the ever-dancing rays of the mind are compelled to behave in some order and rhythm, and bring about their cooperative effort . . . a training for the mind in fixing itself to a single line of thinking.**

The message of the messenger is Mantras. The Mantras are initiated in the form of words by the messenger of God—the Spiritual Guru—to the deserving disciple. After the disciple receives the message, the Mantra, from the Guru, he fixes it at the centre of his consciousness, and makes it the pivot of his life. He constantly repeats it during meditation with intelligent attention to its deep significance. The more he recites it, that much strength, inspiration, and Divine protection will save him from adverse evil forces. The chanting gradually builds around him an invisible and impenetrable spiritual armor—proof against the assaults of darkness and evil.

Saint Patanjali, the exponent of Yoga, in explaining devotion to God, declares that the sacred syllable "A U M" is the symbol of God. AUM is observed as the Supreme Mantra or Pranava Mantra. AUM is the most powerful of all the Mantras. One is bound to get knowledge and detachment by faithful chanting of AUM.

The technique of reciting or chanting a certain formula or incantation is called Japa. It is a great aid for concentration of the mind. It makes a permanent magnetic link among body, mind, and soul. It has the potency of galvanizing the individual into sustained creative effort. Japa is a training by which the ever-dancing rays of the mind are compelled to behave in some order and rhythm, and bring about their cooperative effort. Japa is a training for the mind in fixing itself to a single line of thinking. Japa limits the playground of the mind and its activities to a prescribed sphere. The best and most convenient form to do Japa is to have the body in a particular posture (preferably in Padmasana pose as seen in the cover page of PRANA YOGA LIFE, Spring, 1977, wherein Rev. Swami Sivalingam is in Padmasana pose, the tongue chanting a Mantra). If an individual were to practice that, how then can the mind do anything but limit itself within these specified circumstances?

One should bear in mind and should not forget that though all Mantras are in the Scriptures, the Mantra is to be initiated to the disciple by an illuminated messenger of God—the Spiritual Guru. Only then does it become a living seed. The Spiritual Guru—the messenger of God—by his spiritual power gives life to the message, the Mantra, and at the same time awakens the spiritual power latent in the disciple.

The meeting or seeing the Guru for the first time is a spiritual event. It is only with the Grace of God that one meets a Saint in the form of spiritual Guru—the messenger of God. The time and place is very important. Unless the opportune time comes, it is impossible to have the chance to meet or listen to the spiritual Guru wholeheartedly. Our Revered Swami-ji of the Prana Yoga Ashram of California had a moving experience with His Holiness the Late Swami Sivananda at the first meeting in Sivanandanager, India. The spiritual Guru—the messenger of God—blessed, initiated, and poured his energy into Swami-ji. In turn, Swami-ji sincerely reminds us of Master Saint Thayumanavar who was able to contact a spiritual and Mouna Guru under the merciful direction of the Divine power at the Rock Fort Temple of Trichinapelly, South India. It is almost impossible, in a brief note like this, to do justice to the individual contribution made by this great Statesman, Saint Thayumanavar, to world thought or spirituality. He was a Sage, Saint, Mystic, Poet, Scholar, Siddha and Yogi, all combined in a unique way. He was undoubtedly the most eminent of all Saints that South India gave birth to, in that his teachings have a universal outlook and were meant for humanity as a whole.

Just like YOGASANA ALAYAM at Madras in South India, Prana Yoga Ashram, founded by Rev. Swami Sivalingam, is a mission dedicated to explore the Divine and good qualities of man. It is because of Rev. Swami-ji's prudence, divine nature, and simplicity that the mission has been slowly and successfully fulfilling its objectives in foreign lands. To raise the moral character in man, Rev. Swami-ji has the main technique at his disposal—PRANA YOGA. He has consecrated his whole life for that noble cause where one can see and easily put into practice the universality and equality of Yoga brotherhood. PRANA YOGA CENTRES provide opportunities for all to reform themselves and to strive for a better life in their rebirth. ●

# Prosper All

Kaviyogi Shuddhananda Bharati

PROSPER ALL PROSPER ALL
CONSCIOUS OF THE ONE IN ALL

The earth is one; the breath is one
The sky above is one
Humanity is soul is one
The goal of life is one.
(PROSPER ALL)

North and South and East and West
Are one in horizon
This harmony of life is best
Where all are everyone.
(PROSPER ALL)

Yoga unites us soul to soul
And science expands life
Let their union be integral
Like that of husband and wife.
(PROSPER ALL)

Awake arise, alert and walk
Onward to cosmic bliss
Seek and see before you talk
The unique ONE that is.
(PROSPER ALL)

Start anon, inner communion
With souls of cosmic Light
And you will see a World-Union
Shining on sublime height.
(PROSPER ALL)

Be broad like sky, be bright like sun
And deep like dancing sea
Where mumbling streams mingle in One
Like fragrant air be free.
(PROSPER ALL)

The night is gone; the dawn is on
With joy-thrills of beauty
A Silent Splendour leads us on
From duty to duty.
(PROSPER ALL)

March abreast comrades of Love
From peace to blessed peace
The Captain commands from above
Follow His smiling Grace.
(PROSPER ALL)

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# ANTHAR YOGA SEMINARS

*In October, 1977, Swami-ji initiated a series of one and two-day Anthar Yoga Seminars for the intensive awakening of the inner Self. These weekend seminars, usually held twice a month, are personally conducted by Swami-ji. Pranayama, meditation, holy mantra chanting, asanas, silence, mantra writing, a vegetarian meal or fasting, and a special lecture by Swami-ji are included among the spiritual activities. Beginning with the inaugural lecture below, Prana Yoga Life will regularly feature Anthar Yoga Lectures by Swami-ji.*

# LIFE FORCE

(Lecture delivered by Swami Sivalingam during Anthar Yoga Seminar at Prana Yoga Ashram, Berkeley, California, October 15, 1977)

I will explain to you for a few minutes the inner life force which you do have. The thoughts are the great life force. For one who does not know the way to use it properly, the thoughts become as dust. You have to *know every thought*; you have to recognize and remember about it. Then you become the Self. It means we are living something or we do have another life inside—within us. This we call a Self. When one cannot understand his own thoughts, he has worries, problems, confusions, difficulties, sickness, weakness, oversleepiness—so many troubles. One who really recognizes what kind of thoughts he has, what is that, he becomes what we call a Self. This is the other life within us which we call the life force.

The life force which you do have as you are recognizing the thoughts properly and acting properly for the thoughts is granting you great energetic life, an extraordinary, powerful life, an everlasting joyful life. One who really recognizes the way to his own thoughts—that person always has beautiful balance. That's because the thoughts come from the mental and physical aspect. One who really recognizes about it all the time will never miss his own life.

For example, before I was explaining that a student said, "Swami-ji, I'm very fat, but I don't know what to do about it. Please give me any kind of explanation." I said, "Oh my dear, you have to be careful about the diet. The overeating plus oversleeping makes you more and more fat because certain nervous connections are made dull from the overeating. Then gradually you feel to sleep more. Then you're starting another kind of worry. Altogether combining, you miss your life. This comes from thoughts—you don't care about your own thoughts, you see. One's weakness internally makes a lot of bubblings called thoughts. But those thoughts will never help you. They give you more and more weakness, weakness, weakness. And how much you have weakness from thoughts which do not touch in your heart, or touch in your balance—that becomes more weakness, weak thoughts."

When you go on a boat or big ship on the ocean, speedily going on, you can see from the boat, peeping to see in the water, a million, million bubbles coming. The million million bubbles look so beautiful—like pure white cotton. But they won't stay. One who does not recognize or realize or understand that his own thoughts are like these bubbles, has more and more problems coming. One who really recognizes his own thoughts—that person really attains rejuvenation. That person never has any kind of sufferings or problems.

One who writes books recognizes his own true thoughts. The talkings, activities, spiritual experiences, spiritual practices—everything stays in his mind or in his knowledge. That's because he is always using the knowledge point. This we call life force. Another example—there are those who have a certain negative attitude that they do not change even after so many years. Why? Because they do not communicate with their own thoughts. They do know that. If we are going to do these practices we can easily change, but they don't care seriously and they don't bother about it. Well, as it is. Take it easy. Something like that. But one who really recognizes his own thoughts—that person is never missing the life to live on this earth.

How can we get it? First of all, we do just as we are doing now, relaxations and meditations. When you sit in a proper position to think of your own self, then proper mental and physical balance comes to you. When

the balance comes to you, then you are going to be entering the Self. Then everything combined, the thoughts become purer and purer. This is like a filtering. The bubbling thoughts come under control from watching the thoughts. The thoughts become pure thoughts. One who does not filter the thoughts, one who does not care about the thoughts becomes a destroyer of his own life. He is missing the life. It means also for one who is really filtering the thoughts, concentrating the thoughts, the breath is coming very properly. In that way all kinds of diseases, sickness, weakness, all are going to disappear.

So many people who do not know how to find their own thoughts turn to reading a lot of books. But for one who does not have the clean thoughts the essence of the reading cannot stay with him. He has to come to that stage, that position, where the essence of the books can easily touch in his heart. From that position also he can easily communicate, easily understand the thoughts—what kind of thoughts and how to make sure to stay with the meaning of the thoughts. This is called the life force.

Every thought is extremely alive; every activity is extremely alive. For one who really corresponds and communicates—if he concentrates his own thoughts, then he can find how much energy, power and strength he does have. But we don't care for ourselves. We just depend upon the weakness of the thoughts, thoughts of the weakness. Then we are missing our real health, real happiness, real joy. And what happens is a lot of sickness, worries and problems—all affecting us like demon-devils, endlessly going on to our life's end.

Life force—it's of great importance to know that. It means exactly the thoughts. We have to filter the thoughts, recognize the thoughts. One who does not meditate or does not communicate with the spiritual, reads anatomy books to find out about the body. That reading is just for the time being and is also like a dream. But when you filter

*Swami-ji lecturing to devotees at an Anthar Yoga Seminar at the Prana Yoga Centre, Berkeley, California.*

your own thoughts, you can know everything inside—how the body is functioning, what's going on—everything—you know that. In that way you can easily develop the one true life, true path, true direction. Then the weakness of the dullness will disappear. This we call the life force.

I simply say for anybody or everybody it is not so difficult. The weak thoughts make you to think it is difficult. If you really think—the thoughts come from where? Thoughts really help us. How we can find joy—how we can find knowledge. If you really work on it, then you can really find your own thoughts—true thoughts.

For that the practices are very important. Some few rules and regulations, especially meditation, relaxation—all completely communicating mind and body together. Then success comes according to everyone's own judgment, own way of controlling that weakness from thoughts. In 3 months or 6 months you can get it exactly.

Compare with spiritual giants—all come from the normal life. Other people wonder how spiritualists can be so different. It's because we are always regulating our thoughts—controlling, regulating. So really what I mean is the thoughts are going to be true. Regulating means you do not depend upon your own thoughts. If you depend upon your own thoughts, this makes more and more bubbles coming—the weakness. If you don't depend upon your own thoughts, you are going to be concentrating upon and regulating your thoughts. Then really you are going to be affecting the Soul-Self. This we call the life force.

I heard so many people telling, "I'm very, very busy, Swami-ji." Why do they talk like that? The reason is they are too much involved with the thoughts. But they do not concentrate upon the real true thoughts. Lots of thoughts and ideas bubbling up—they are just completely involved with them. So they are missing the true point and true ideas. Also many people are talking about so many subjects—in so many directions they are talking. Finally, they don't know what they say. This is time wasting. But one who is really following to learn can find, from the many thoughts, the true thoughts. Touch the true thoughts and that will really wake you up to know the true life force.

In this way, if you find the life force, then you can live so much longer, so joyfully, beautifully, healthily, happily. The physical body never will bother you. Nasal breath never will bother you. And every part goes well. If you are missing the real thoughts and you are too much involved with the bubble thoughts, then what happens? Then all is missing. You don't know your finger, you don't know your nose, you don't know your mouth, you don't know your eyes. You'll be searching outside, you'll be missing here. Then starts a lot of sickness and weakness, sneezing, blowing, forever sleeping—sleeping 10 hours and still no peace—you won't get peace. ●

# Lessons of the Land

## PRANA

Photos by Sudharsan

*If ever you have worry or problems with no one to guide you, go to observe ants, frogs, and trees. Then concentrate upon them and all the worries will vanish.*

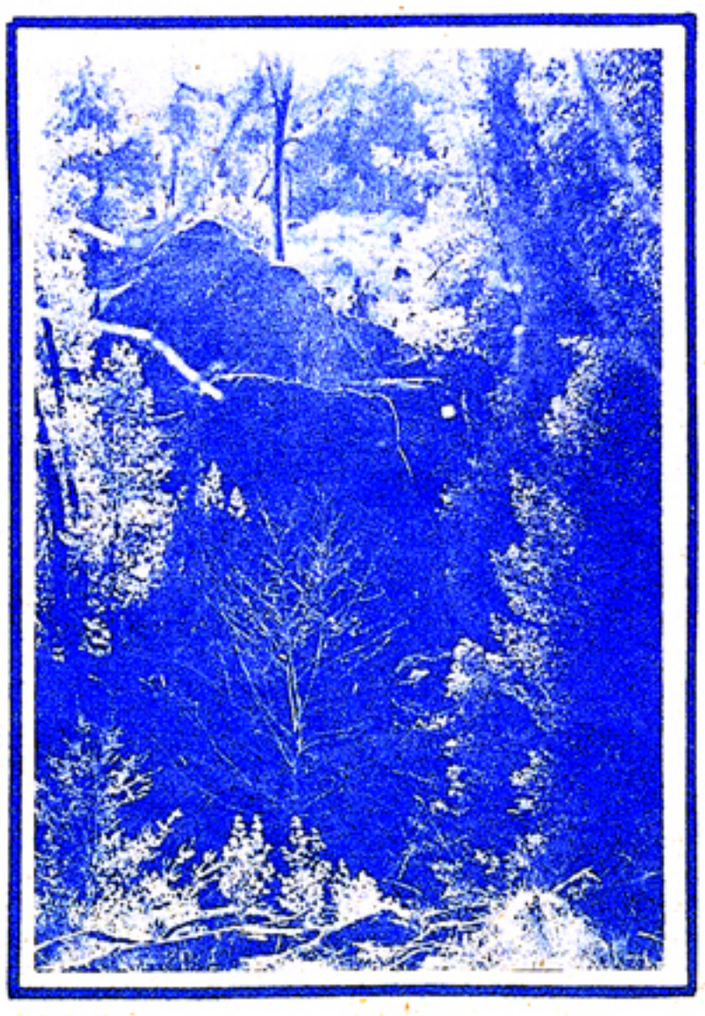
**—Swami Sivalingam**

• • •

Images of a landscape can be windows on ourselves. Though not as conscious as we, land is like us. The more I work and live at the Ashram retreat in the remote coastal mountains of northern California—Ayodhyanagar—the more I identify with what I perceive there. It's true that because of a literary bent my mind runs naturally to metaphor. But, beyond that, I believe that poetic likenesses occur to us in the first place because everything is a variant manifestation of the same spiritual source.

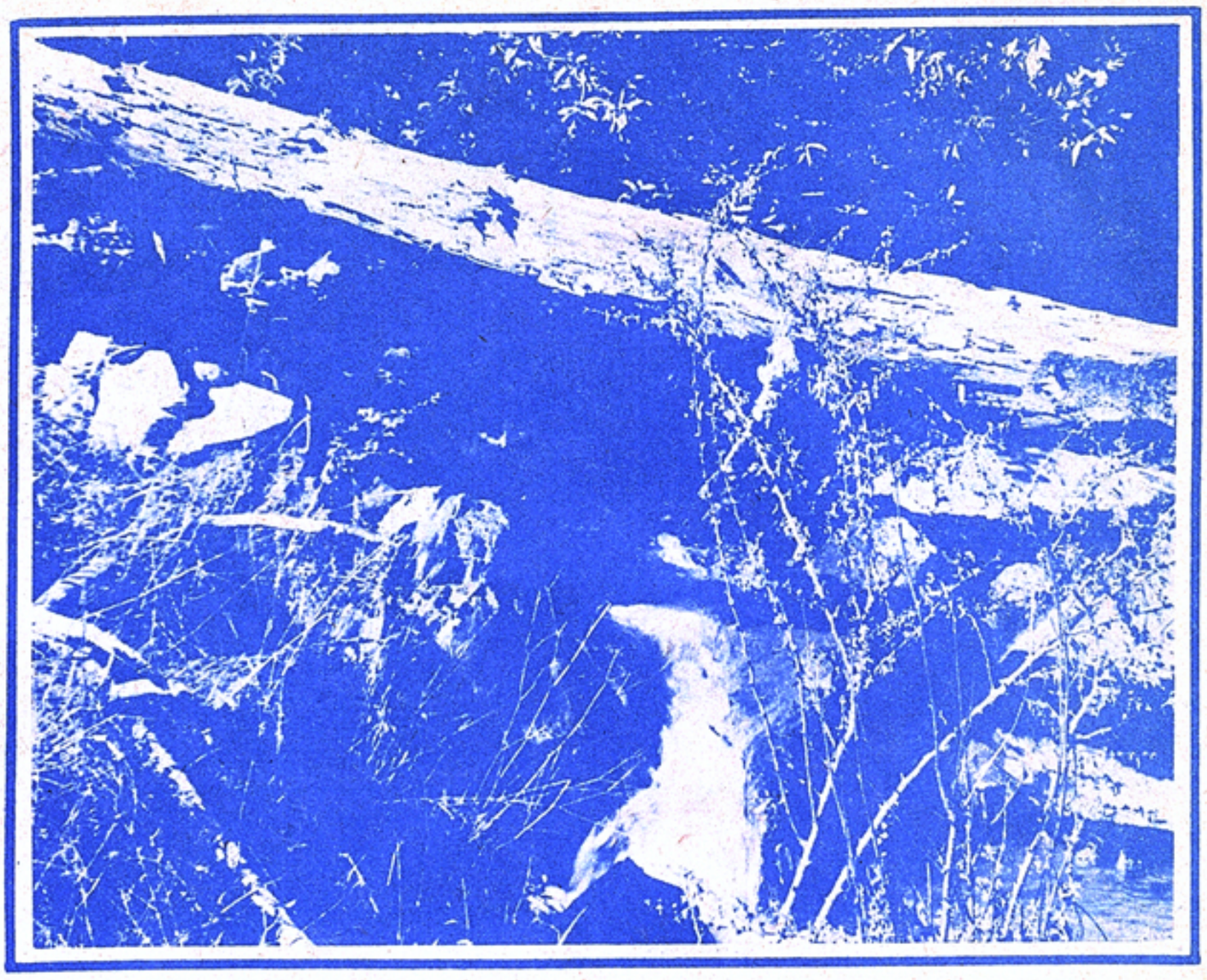
On first sight, and generally ever since, Ayodhya has seemed what I can only call heart-rendingly beautiful to me—not merely beautiful. There I can take a step a certain way, glance a certain angle, and some sudden view or unexpected spot brings a rush of feeling; I am laughing with wet eyes and shaking my head and thanking God out loud, alone among rocks and logs and creeks and moss. I have roamed the land there half the night, using a flashlight only in pockets of shadow, excited thinking about how to develop the many energies at play on Ayodhya's slopes.

For the land, too, is alive, graced with a past which is told in the present as we watch and listen. The very ruggedness of that coastal range betrays its birth in the instability of massive earth movement, with volcanic activity persisting long after man first came to live there. During the centuries when the Sinkyone Indians held stewardship of the Ayodhya locality—and they left arrowheads and fish-net weights showing they lived right on the property—they did for themselves very well without disturbing the natural balance among the energies of water, wind, and sun. The solar energy stored in the timber held the soil on the slopes against the mighty downrushing waters of the rainy season. Animals found food and cover in the woods. The Sinkyones leached and ate buckeyes and practically cultivated the oaks as orchards, staving off insects and blights for the sake of the acorn harvest. They killed some deer, and the mountain lions killed some others, so that an over-abundance of deer did not eat every scrap of greenery. The water as well as the soil was held by the trees, and the extremity of the rainy and dry seasons, typical of California, was offset by a natural underground reservoir that welled up when rain did not fall down.



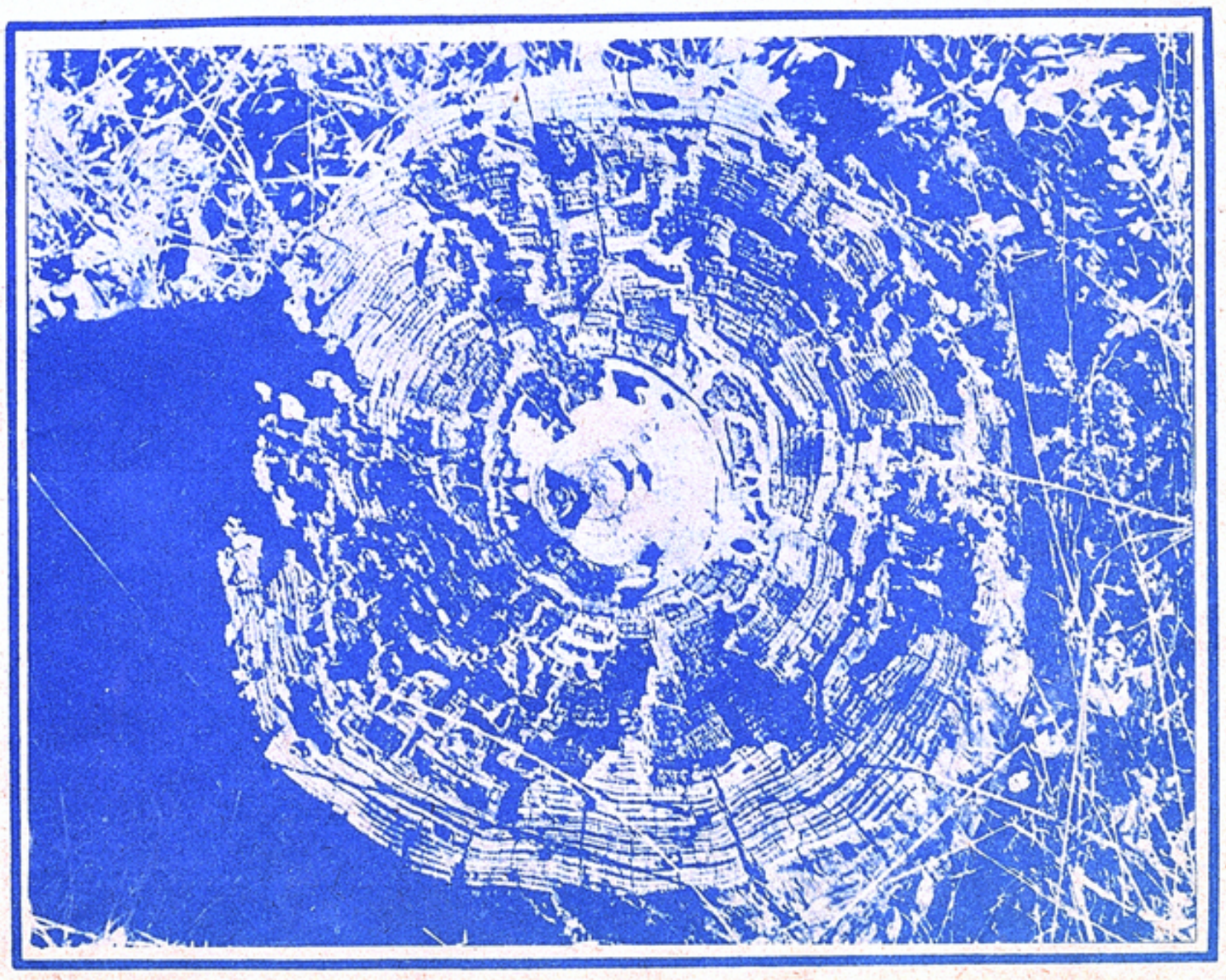
After the white settlers took the land from the Indians along that northern coast, they did not long content themselves with homesteading and subsistence farming. They timbered. Then they relegated the log-strewn slopes to sheep or cattle, which cropped close to new vegetation and trampled the loose earth. The site of Ayodhyanagar was part of one of these family-owned commercial ranches and shared the destiny of most of California's mountain land that lay beneath the timber line.

You can still see fallen trees and falling earth fashioning in their own way a new cycle in the life of the land, though, in fact, many beautiful madrones and buckeyes and live oaks were never felled, and during the last 25 years many new trees have grown up. Where not wooded as formerly, the steeper slopes gully from the torrents of winter, which suck down boulders and banks, undermining remaining trees until their roots rise like giant crabs from the dirt, further loosening the soil. Creeks reroute themselves as dams of deadwood and stones pile up in their paths and force them around or even underground to filter through the soaked soil and sur-



face elsewhere as springs. It's as if the very land itself—rock, wood, and all—liquifies and flows toward some new level of balance. Spring winds upturn old spars of trees in the soft soil, leaving emblematic silhouettes clawing the sky. During the summer, the spring crop of tall grass turns a sere brown, and the ground cracks. The deer forage determinedly for greenery, braving fences and houses, settling for tree leaves that they ordinarily would not eat. It is a land of crackling tinder waiting for the rains of late fall. And, finally, as the weather shapes the land, so the land influences the weather. The rugged hills channel the wind, calling the winter rain from heavy coastal clouds.

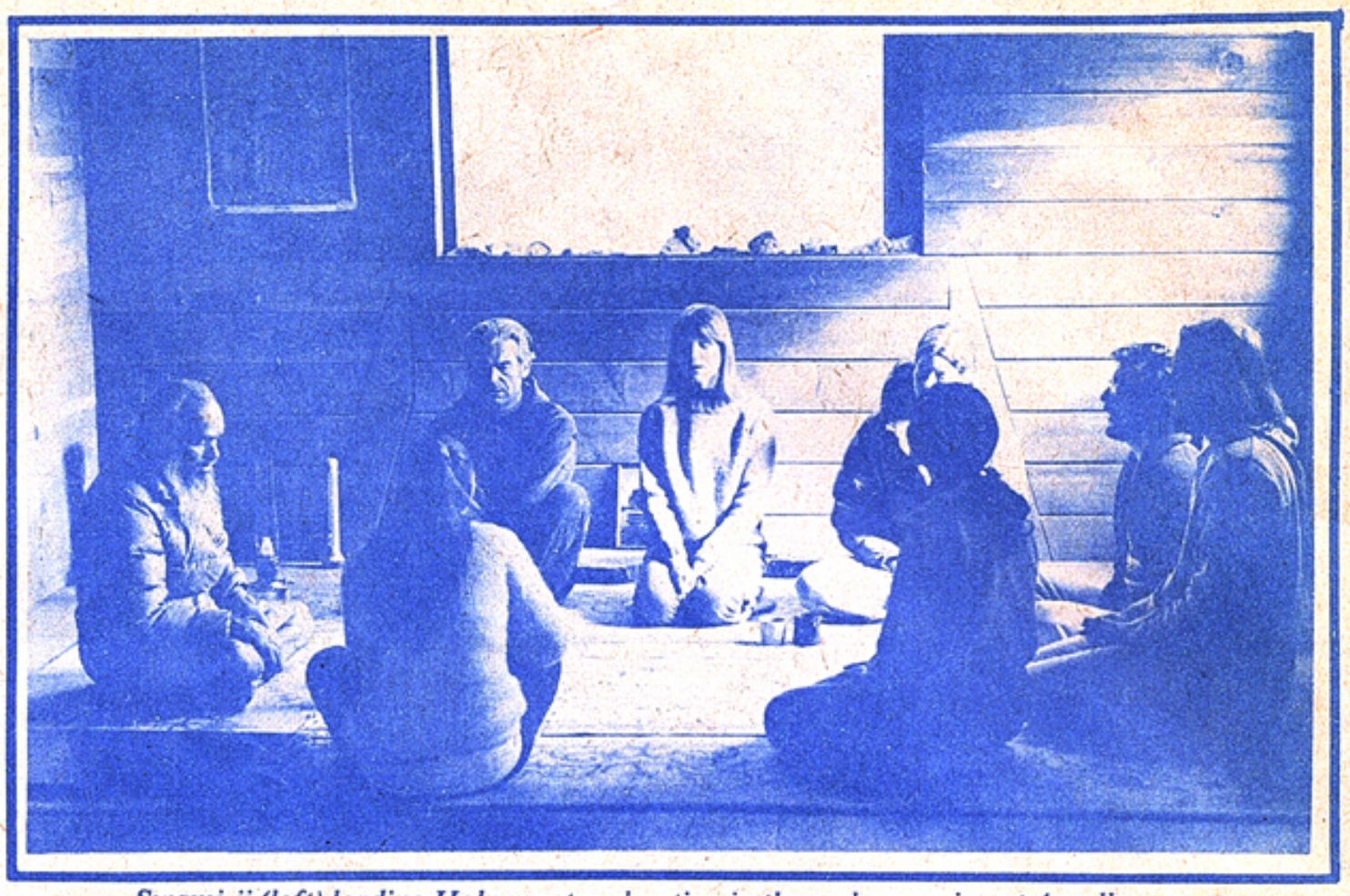
# AYODHYANAGAR



While wind, rain, and sun are whipping up dramatic weather, the deadwood is quietly decomposing as the energy of bacteria, insects, and woodpeckers breaks it back down into rich humus to nourish the thoussands of new trees now coming along to re-stabilize the soil. Behind Swami-ji's house a baby madrone tree is growing, symbolically enough, right up from the bottom of a huge, hollow redwood stump. The land awaits our help in regenerating itself . . . and at the same time helps us to see how to regenerate ourselves.

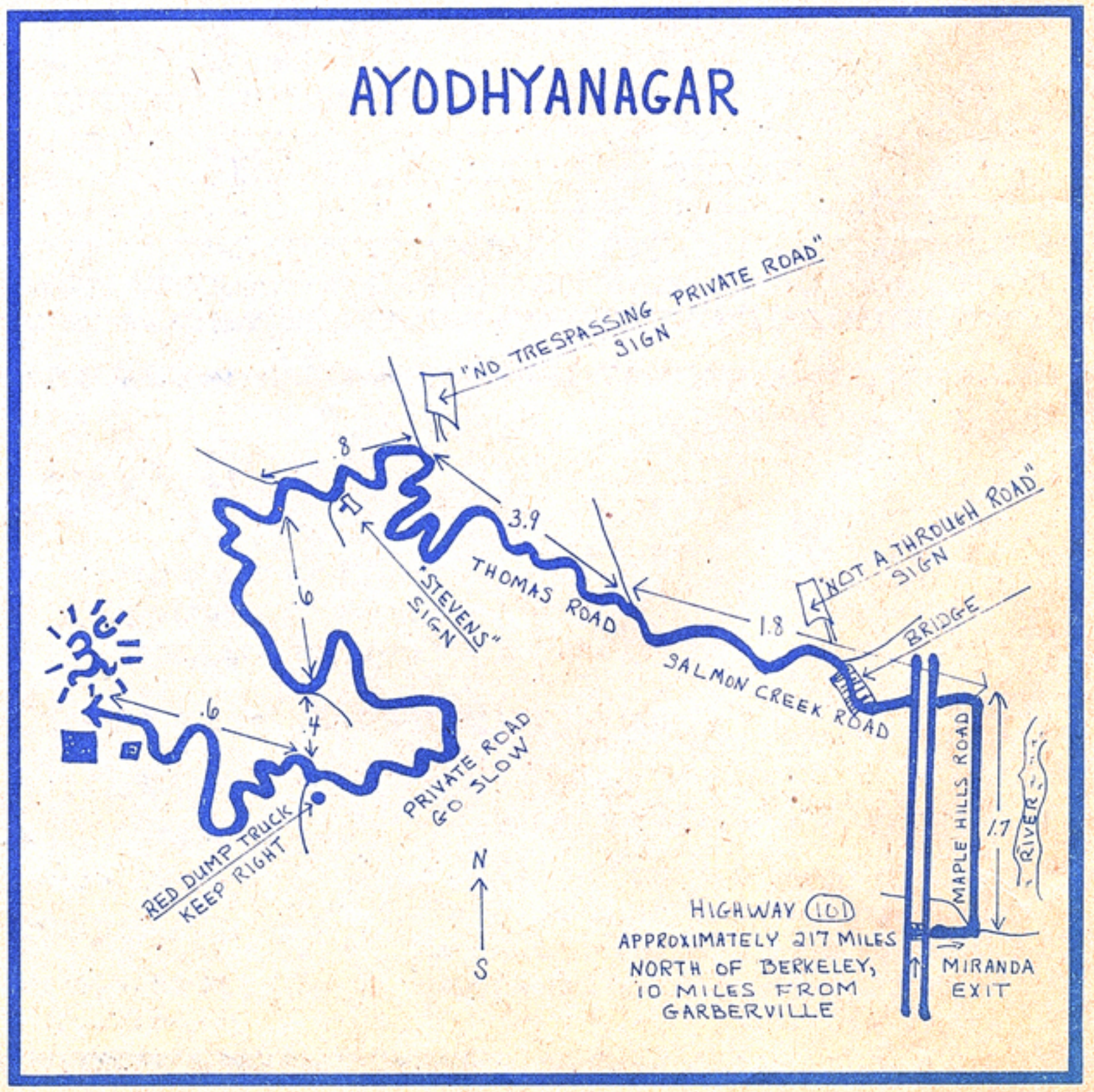
The key matter for both the land and for us is one of balance. The same "wild" energies that can devastate a place when thrown out of balance are the very energies we regard as alternatives to fossil fuels—water, wind, and sun. All that harnessing them requires, besides technical knowledge, is positive thinking. The same cycles of balance and imbalance characterize our own inner growth. The emotions of fear, anger, jealousy, and greed are only life energy out of balance. Our inner upheavals, uprootings, storms, floods, and droughts are merely imbalances of forces that could at any time be converted from destruction to creation if we only understood fully what Swami-ji means when he says, "Everything good."

It may be easier to grasp how the solar energy of Ayodhya can be converted to hot water or nocturnal heating, or how winds and streams can yield electricity, than to know how to transform fear, anger, jealousy, and greed into well-being and spiritual advancement. Most people who come to yoga very seriously bring with them a broken body, broken marriage, broken heart, or broken confidence. As a striving ego they have failed to direct and balance the energies of their life force. They start yoga with a practical motive—to get repaired. But we cannot "repair" ourselves until we begin to accept the goodness of what seem like awful things in our own life, that is, begin to view "misfortune" as merely the curriculum that the soul programs for itself. This means transforming our energy into an instrument of our will—not of our materialistic motivation but of the divine will embodied in each of us.



*Swami-ji (left) leading Holy mantra chanting in the early morning at Ayodhyanagar.*

When I work and live at Ayodhya, I think of these things. It touches me as no other place ever has, because now I can see in it my own inner cycles, the potentiality for good or evil of energy that is itself neither but awaits the consciousness of our own power to make it anything. ●



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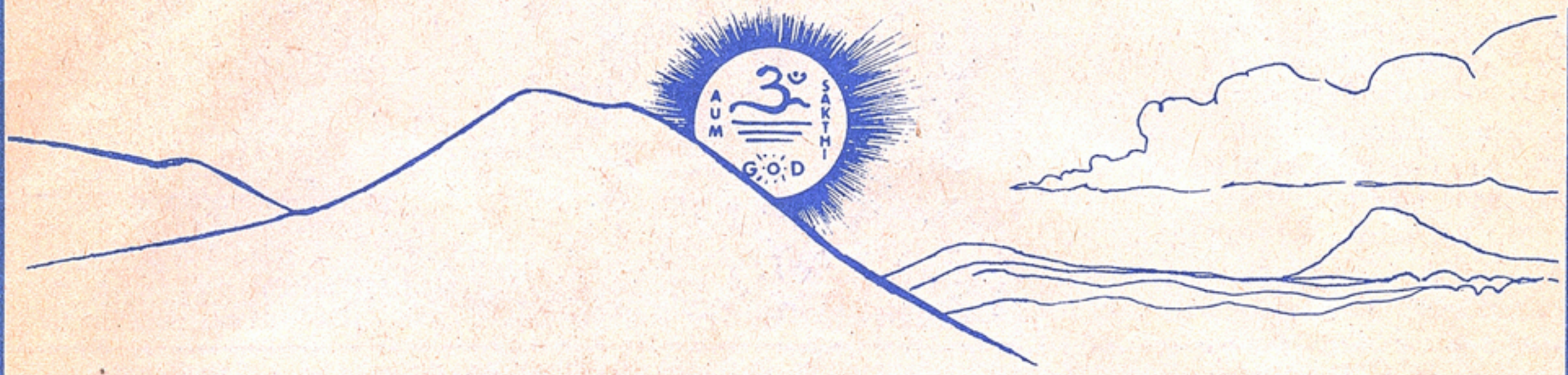


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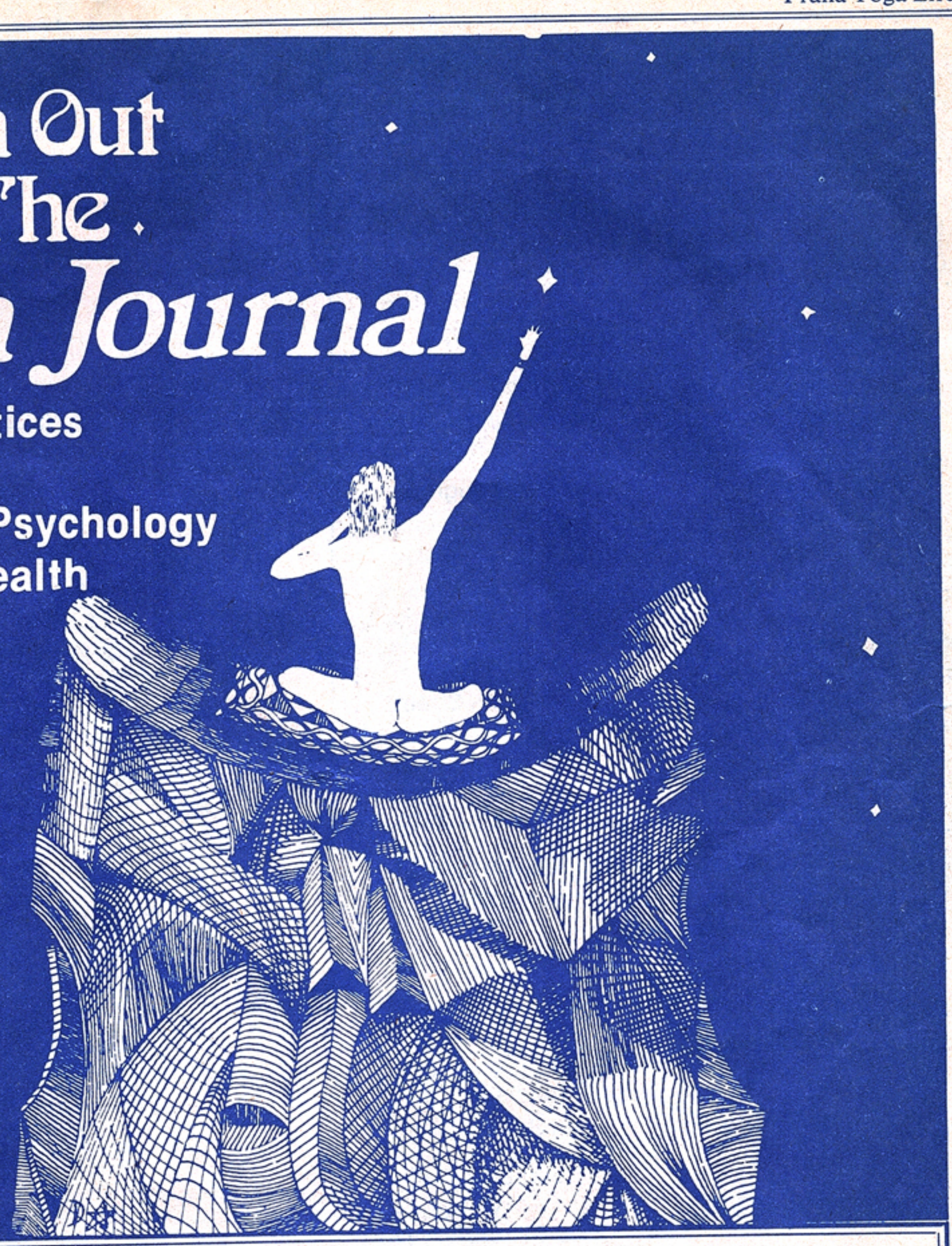

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# The Prana Yoga Experience

Sudharsan

As I walked up the hill almost three years ago to attend my first yoga class, I had no idea what to expect. I was aware that yoga was an ancient practice of mind and body control, but beyond that I knew little. I had heard about yoga postures and meditation from various sources over the years and had even watched a few minutes of yoga on TV once, but I had never expected to find myself taking a yoga class at an Ashram from an Indian master of yoga. I felt curious, excited, and slightly out of place. How *does* one act in an Ashram, I wondered?

The feelings of warmth and good will were immediately evident as I entered the Ashram. A large group of people had gathered for this class (the first one which Swami Sivalingam was to teach since his return from several months of traveling to other countries) and there was a good deal of animated conversation as people arrived. I was particularly impressed at the way many people greeted each other other with a slight bow, palms together in front of their hearts. When I later learned that the meaning of this greeting, *Namaste*, is "I salute that in you which is like that in me," I was even more attracted to the simplicity and beauty of its exchange. I searched out a spot on the rug, not too near the front of the rapidly filling room and began somewhat self-consciously to imitate the warm-up movements other people were doing. Fortunately, the warm-ups didn't look too different from those I had learned in various sports as I was growing up.

Suddenly, Swami Sivalingam was there. With a radiant smile, Swami-ji greeted many people by name as he took his place at the front of the room. The strongest impression I recall from that moment was the strength and clarity of Swami-ji's appearance. It was as though I was looking through freshly washed windows; Swami-ji seemed to sparkle and shine. As I glanced around the room, I noticed that others seemed to reflect that energy themselves. There was obviously more than a teacher-student connection in evidence. Then, all at once, we were beginning the class and my attention became focused on myself rather than others.

After a few more warm-ups directed by Swami-ji, we settled into a comfortable cross-legged position for a period of meditation. Swami-ji instructed us to bring our attention to

**Namaste: "I salute that in you which is like that in me."**

one point—a phrase, sound, or image which was of positive value for us, and to place that one point mentally at the spot between our eyebrows. Then, sitting comfortably erect with our hands in our laps, we closed our eyes and began to sing the AUM sound. After three short chants, we sat silently, breathing normally, with eyes and lips closed. During the rest of the meditation period Swami-ji told us to keep the mind on one point, in one direction, and to bring the attention back to our selected meditation focus if it should wander. We were also told to make any adjustments to our position quietly if we felt strained or tense, but otherwise to remain still and silent until meditation was over. Not surprisingly, my mind was not so easy to still as my body was, yet I found the atmosphere created by a group of people being silent together to be very pleasant and peaceful. After about fifteen minutes Swami-ji began the AUM sound again to signal the end of meditation. Then we lay back full length on the floor in the corpse pose and relaxed completely for a couple of minutes.

Several times during this rest, and at other times during the class, Swami-ji instructed us to take a deep, full inhalation and exhalation through both nostrils to clear our bodies and minds and assist the process of balancing the energies which were stimulated by the meditation and postures. Each time we did this I was struck once again by the power of so simple an act. It was as though I had forgotten the breath existed until then. Not only my mind, but my whole body seemed to appreciate the cleansing effect.

Next we did a number of asanas (body postures), each of which stretched and energized some part of the body in a special way. For example, we did the cobra pose, lying on the front side of the body with the palms flat on the floor alongside the chest, pushing slowly up, turning the head toward the ceiling, and curving the spine backwards until the lower abdomen almost left the floor. Then, holding that position with arms still slightly bent, we did four short, vigorous, deep breaths before slowly reversing the process and coming to rest on the floor again. In this way the neck, spine, and lower back were exercised thoroughly and the entire front of the body and internal organs were stretched and massaged, encouraging increased circulation and flexibility. After a short pause, we did the cobra pose again. This time we pushed up and back until the arms were straight. In this way a different portion of the spine was affected and the neck and shoulders stretched in a new way. Thus, the variations on even one posture opened up numerous possibilities of benefitting the body in unique ways. The breaths seemed to accent and focus the effects more powerfully and effectively during each pose. Even though I did not know the names of the postures or how to do them, by listening to Swami-ji's instructions and observing others, I found it easy enough to figure out what to do. The effects I felt from

even my first attempts were very satisfying and I became aware of parts of my body that I hadn't realized existed before.

After about thirty minutes of postures alternated with relaxation and deep breaths, we once again sat in a cross-legged position for pranayama (scientific breathing exercises). Swami-ji demonstrated the single nostril breathing technique, showing us the position for hands and how to use the thumb and fingers of the right hand to close one nostril at a time while taking slow full breaths. Closing the right nostril with the right thumb, we inhaled through the left nostril, and then closing the left nostril with the 3rd and 4th fingers of the right hand, we exhaled through the right nostril. After thirty of these single nostril breaths we relaxed in the corpse pose. During the exercise, I began to realize just how much "chatter" was going on in my head as I tried to stay focused on the slow steady counting of the breaths. I tried to imagine what it would be like to stay focused on the breaths continuously rather than just for a few minutes (and in so doing lost the count again). When everyone had finished, there was time for discussion and questions before the closing chants. Then, Swami-ji said we should have a little "tea," which turned out to be a full Indian-style vegetarian meal prepared earlier in the evening by Swami-ji. It was quite a treat with which to finish this special evening.

In the years since that first yoga class, I have gone through many changes. From the combination of regular daily yoga practice and a vegetarian diet, my health has improved, my body has become more flexible, and my energy and ability to concentrate have increased. I have also begun to contact, through Swami-ji's guidance, the power and meaning of the spiritual dimension in my life through the balancing of the physical and mental dimensions. The experience of Prana Yoga, however, remains essentially the same. The Ashram has the same warm, enriching atmosphere as before, the classes include meditation, asanas, and pranayama as before (even though no two classes are ever exactly alike) and, though I can do many new postures and have experienced several different types of breathing exercises, I still find myself looking forward to class with excitement and curiosity—wondering what we will do this evening that we have never done before. ●

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Our own thoughts are cheating our Soul. Only Heart and Will are True light of the inner Self.

**—Swami Sivalingam**

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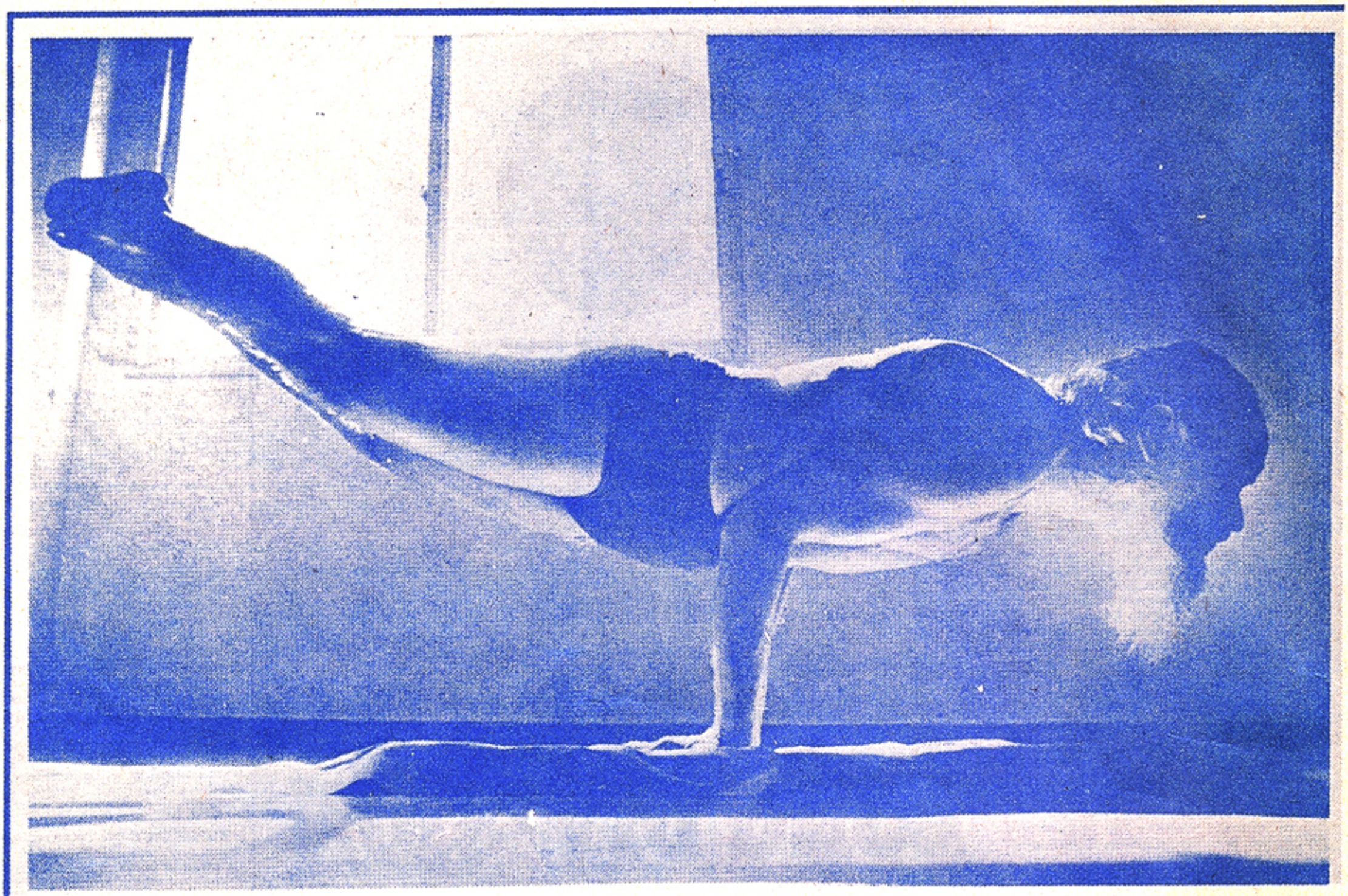


Are there any new twists in the Yoga business? CATHERINE ROSENHEIMER paid a call on a jet-age swami who, like many of the Yoga masters, now spends most of his time outside India. Photos: LESTER MILLMAN.

# THE GURU COMES TO KIRYAT ONO

A WEEK AGO Sunday morning, I knew next to nothing about Yoga, and had never met a genuine guru. After a session with Swamiji Sivalingam, I know a little more than I did before. I also know about aching muscles in places where I never dreamt they existed.

Swamiji is currently spending three weeks in Israel, at the invitation of Tamar Barkan, an English immigrant, who runs her own Prana Yoga Centre in Kiryat Ono. She owes her knowledge of Yoga to an American girl once called Susan and today known as Dhairayavathi Devi, a disciple of Swamiji's at his Berkeley, California *ashram*.

In Kiryat Ono the other morning, some 15 Israeli housewives sat cross-legged — in the lotus position — on the floor, humming a long low "ommmmmmm." Facing them sat Swamiji, clad in a long yellow sari-type robe, wearing navy blue socks and a slightly incongruous zip-through fisherman knit sweater as a concession to the December chill.

"The 'ommmmmmm' is very important," he was explaining. "It is a kind of *shalom*, a peace within the soul."

Demonstrating a series of exercises — 12 sun positions for morning meditation, followed by a series of spinal twists, he continued: "Age makes no difference — I could be 10 months old or 150 — but if the body is soft and supple, then the person is soft inside too. Worries and stress make the body stiff. You need lots of meditation to rid yourself of worries. Worries are not real, they are like a newspaper — lots of print, little truth. Therefore — why worry?"

LATER, as he was demonstrating an incredible series of exercises and contortions, this time not for the benefit of the class, but for the photographer, I asked the amazingly acrobatic, balding grey-haired guru if he was prepared to state his real, rather than philosophical, age. The answer was 45.

Born in the Himalayas, he started to practise Yoga at the age of 15. He had been suffering from malaria for a year, spent a lot of money on medical treatment. And Yoga cured him. While he considers himself a spiritual man, a Hindu, he adheres to no creed, stressing that Yoga is not a religion but mental and physical training in philosophy, combined with proper diet.

"In Yoga, we train ourselves to understand ourselves. We start with meditation for mental balance, followed by exercise for physical suppleness. Breathing exercises are extremely important in clearing up the nervous system."

The purpose of standing on one's head, he explains, is to clear the brain. We are always standing, running. When the heart is reversed, it clears the veins and ducts.

I query the advisability of Yoga for people with heart complaints: for them, he says, there are no head-stands, but other simpler exercises. In India, Yoga is medically approved. He knows of 400 diseases, including breast cancer, for which it is a cure. He himself was responsible for restoring the sight of a child of seven within 2½ years.

For ordinary, healthy people, says Swamiji, 15 or 20 minutes a day of Yoga meditation and exercises are sufficient to achieve and maintain a state of personal fitness and relaxation. He himself also follows a very strict diet — he is a vegetarian and a non-smoker; he doesn't touch tea, coffee or alcohol; he eats one large meal every afternoon, is never ill, never suffers from so much as a common cold.

TAMAR BARKAN grew up in London. She started practising Yoga in Israel, just three years ago. It cured her migraines and short-sightedness and made her feel physically good. Her day-to-day life style has remained much the same: she has a husband and a 4½-year-old son — they too participate in Yoga exercises.

She is a part-time librarian, but hopes soon to build up her Yoga Centre and work only there. At present, she gives courses to some 50 people a week, in small groups, in the Tel Aviv area. Compared to Swamiji, she is a novice, practising some 30 Yoga postures to his 400. She starts each morning with meditation, in the lotus position, using the "ommmmmmm" sound. This, she explains, is the most usual sound used in mass meditation. But she hopes that while Swamiji is here he will decide to give her a *mantra* of her own.

The decision — a spiritual matter — is a personal one which Swamiji has to make. If he thinks she is ready for it he will disclose to her in the greatest confidence an abstract, mental sound for her private use only, which will help her to meditate in far greater depth. It is something hard to explain, very personal and secret, and the key to making worries disappear.

Swamiji is a jet age guru, travelling between California, Canada, Denmark, Japan, Hong Kong and India, in each of which he has founded Prana Yoga Centres. From Israel he will continue to Europe and Scandinavia. Most of the great Indian Yoga masters work abroad, he assures me.□

"Sooth...ism"

You need not be one of those degree holders, not a religious person, not a learned man, not even an intelligent creature; just be a person familiar with the alphabet and pick up the book *Wings of Divine Wisdom* by Swami Sivalingam. In three seconds you are a different being. You understand everything. You read —every word of it—said with so much affection and sincerity by a teacher who is simplicity itself. All you do is pick up the right page you need. You were upset—angry, jealous, greedy, lusty, unruly, uncontrollable, finally very restless. The answer is right there—a great medicine, internal tonic, readily available. It comes to you right at a time when you need it—at a time when you seek it.

I have not come across a great communication of knowledge in my whole life that is simpler than *Wings of Divine Wisdom*. This book should have a reader age group of five to ninety-five—without any religious terminology getting in the way of the help you seek.

In 1967 I read the complete *Bhagavat Geeta*. In 1970, *Koran*. In 1971, *Bible*. In 1977, *Wings of Divine Wisdom*. That day I was terribly disturbed—some state of mind which cannot be easily settled down. Complete darkness in front of the eyes. Then the mailman dropped off *Wings of Divine Wisdom*. I did not hesitate a second to read it. I went through the book right from the first page to the last. I had the answer readily given—as if I were so hungry that my mother gave me her milk—the nectar! Not all drink quenches your thirst. Not all food pacifies your hunger. But one accurate drop of Swami Sivalingam's *Wings of Divine Wisdom* can fill your knowledge.

Shri Indrani Iyengar
Stockton, California
11 September, 1977

• • •

Blessed Immortal Self,
H.H. Swami Sivalingam,

Salutations, Adorations and Prostrations. Om Namo Narayanaya. Om Namah Sivanandaya.

Please accept my sincere thanks for the hospitality extended to me and the nice lunch I had with you. Swami Ji was so kind and compassionate to cook a very nice food. It was really a Divine Food. That clearly indicates his pure and loving heart. I am very much impressed with Swami Ji's good work in the field of Spirituality. Swami Ji is an expert in Pranayama, Asana and other aspects of spiritual practices.

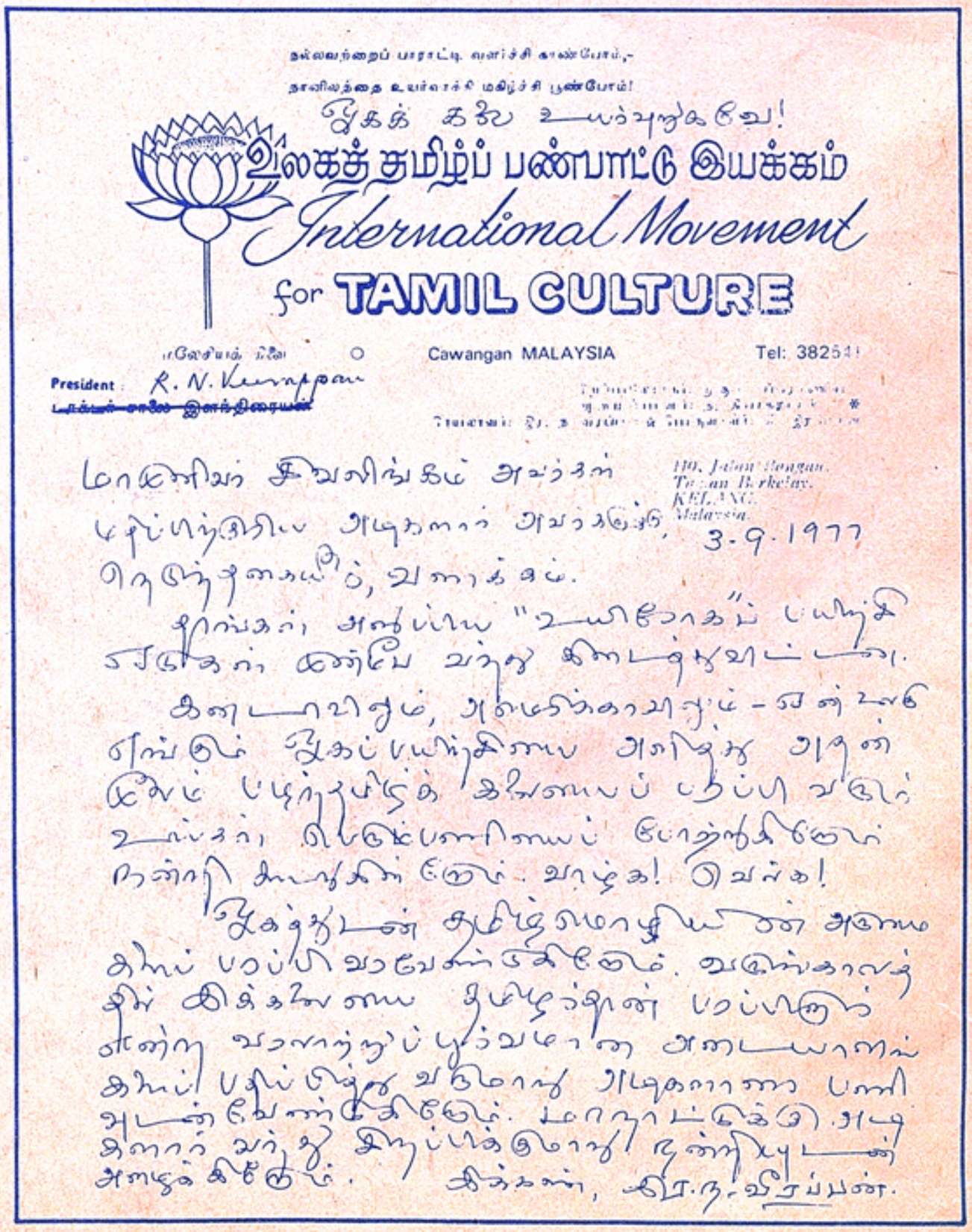
I carried the books Swami Ji had presented to me to Europe and was able to read them whenever I got leisure hours. The Prana Yoga Life Journal is worth reading as it contains much good information.

May God Bless Swami Ji with long life, robust health and strength, a disease-free body, peace and prosperity to guide humanity to lead a spiritual life.

With Prem and Pranams,
Thy Ownself,
Swami Bua Ji
Founder
Indo-American Yoga-Vedanta Society
(New York, N.Y.) 1 December, 1977

• • • •

# *Sharings from*



நல்லவற்றைப் பாராட்டி வளர்ச்சி காண்போம்,-
தானிலத்தை உயர்ச்சி மதிப்பு புண்போம்!
ஓங்குக தமிழ் உயர்புகழ்!

உலகத் தமிழ்ப் பண்பாட்டு இயக்கம்
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President: R. N. Veerappan
Cawangan MALAYSIA Tel: 382541

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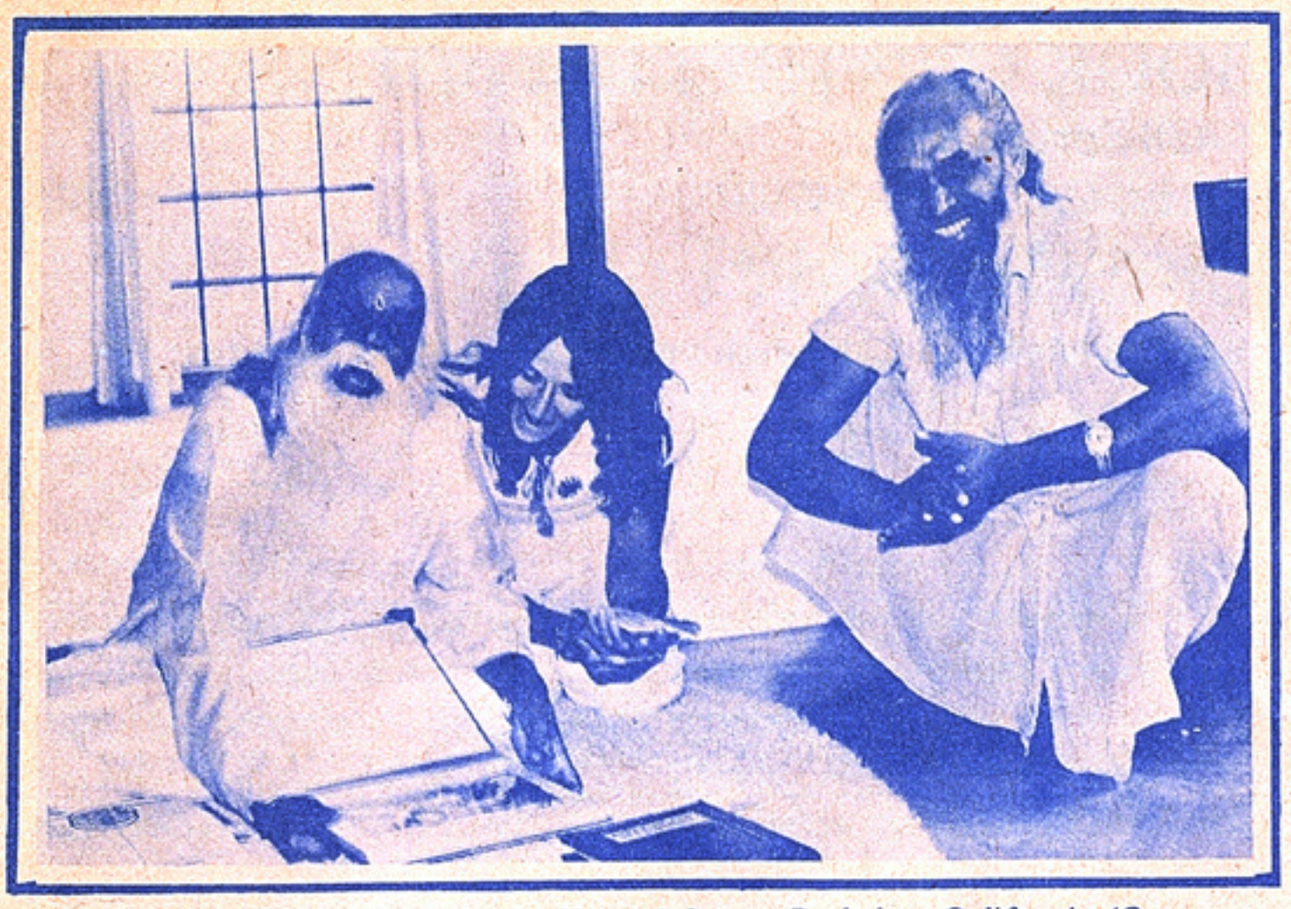
3-9-1977

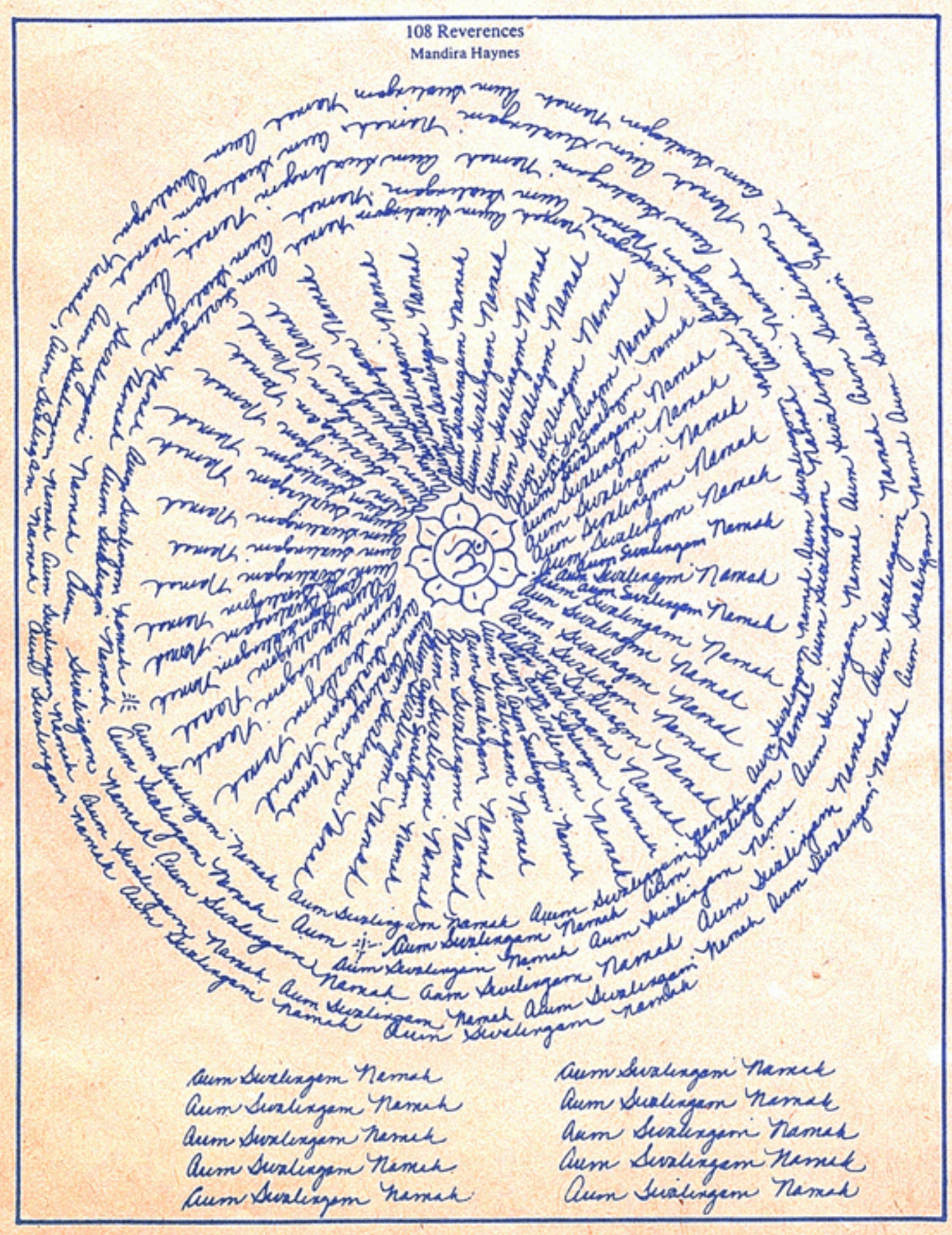
மாண்பமை சிவலிங்கம் அவர்கள்
முற்பகற்றில அடியேனை அவர்களுடைய
திருக்கரங்களில் வரைக்கவும்.
தாங்கள் அனுப்பிய "உயிரோசை" பெற்றுக்
கொண்டேன் என்பதை மகிழ்ச்சியுடன்
தெரிவித்துக் கொள்கிறேன். மாதாமாதம் அது
உங்கள் அன்பு இருப்பைத் தமிழுலகுக்கு
உணர்த்தி, இருக்கையினைப் போற்றுகிறோம்
நன்றி கூறுகிறோம். வாழ்க! வளர்க!

தங்களுடன் தமிழ்மொழியின் அமைப்பு
குறித்து மேலும் கலந்துரையாட விரும்புகிறேன். வருங்காலத்தில்
தமிழ்நாட்டின் பயனாக
என்ற வரலாற்றுப் புகழ்மிக்க அடையாளம்
குறிப்பிடும் வகையில் அடியேனால் பணி
ஆற்றவேண்டுகிறேன். மாதாமாதம் அடி
யார் வீட்டு இருப்பிடமாக நன்றியுடன்
அமைந்திருக்கும். இங்ஙனம், வி.ந.வீரப்பன்.



*Swami Bua Ji visiting Prana Yoga Ashram, Berkeley, California (Oct., 1977), and admiring spiritual work and activities of Swami Sivalingam.*

# *Divine Souls*




Dear Swami Sivalingam,

I thank the Supreme Being for so beautifully speaking in words through Swami-ji in the booklet PRANA YOGA LIFE and the covering letter of positive assurance. I'm thankful for Swami-ji's divine blessings and prayers for spiritual upliftment, and the kind and helpful remembrances of the Members of the Ashram.

In this oneness of spirit I feel these healing rays and I am uplifted and brought nearer to True Self. Such beautiful thoughts as expressed in PRANA YOGA LIFE, going out into the universe, eternally doing their work, their univeral goodness, never to be still, never to be finalized or lost, are an eternal monument to the noble illuminated One. I am sure through the medium of PRANA YOGA LIFE all peoples, of all nations and states of being, have here a channel through which they may become aware of a conscious, knowledgeable peace, which they may share with all God's creatures in the realm of Nature.

Sincerely,
Edith A. White
North Vancouver, B.C., Canada
20 November, 1977

• • •

My dear Swami-ji,

Considering the mission you are carrying on in this material world, you are welcomed anywhere and everywhere in this world. Your mission is intended for the moral and spiritual uplift of mankind, which is sorely needed in the present times.

Yours in Pranam,
H. Ramiah
Tokyo, Japan
4 October, 1977

• • •

(by telegram)

Swami Sivalingam,

I always appreciate your sweet and warm-hearted letters which encourage me very much. Swami-ji is the only person in this world who encourages me and always guides me with such a warm way. Thank you so much.

Mr. Atsuhiko Nakaikae
Tokyo, Japan
27 October, 1977

• • •

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Swami-ji's meditation photos: $.75, 1.25, 2.60, 4.40, 7.50, and many more.

# BOOK REVIEW:

Sudharsan

## Yogic Physical Culture
## Raja Yoga

*Yogacharya Sundaram, author, great yogi, and Director: Sundara Yoga Sala, Bangalore, South India.*

*Yogic Physical Culture* by Yogacharya Sundaram. The Yoga Publishing House, No. 32, Payappa Garden, Bangalore – 560051, South India, 1973. Rs. 15 (in English).

*Raja Yoga* by Yogacharya Sundaram. The Yoga Publishing House, No. 32, Payappa Garden, Bangalore – 560051, South India, 1975. Rs. 25 (in English).

Persons interested in yoga in the United States have a number of books on the subject from which to choose. Many authors offer volumes on the theory or practice of yoga designed especially for western tastes. It is more difficult, however, to find writings on yoga which communicate not only the principles and practices of yoga, but also a sense of Indian spirituality and culture as well. For those interested in yoga as it has been taught and experienced in India for the past several thousand years, two volumes, *Yogic Physical Culture*, and *Raja Yoga*, by Yogacharya Sundaram of India, are excellent sources.

In *Yogic Physical Culture*, Sri Sundaram concentrates on basic physical postures (asanas), purifications, diet, and therapeutics of the yoga tradition. In addition to extensive descriptions and illustrations of twenty-five basic asanas, their effects upon the various parts and sub-systems of the body are explained. For example, the direct stimulation of the endocrine system by several of the asanas, such as the shoulder stand, plough, and head stand, is pointed out and the healthful benefits of this "internal" massage are indicated. In addition, the author describes briefly the value of Pranayama, the control of the life force (Prana) through special breathing exercises, and gives instructions for certain exercises. Finally, there are chapters on proper diet and programs of treatment for constipation, dyspepsia, obesity, and other types of illness. Though the emphasis in this volume is on the beneficial effects of yoga practices for anyone who desires vibrant health and vitality, Sri Sundaram also clearly points out the spiritual experience which is at the heart of yoga. The ultimate goal of this health-giving practice is the development of a body and mind which manifest the spiritual dimension as well as the physical and mental ones. In fact, the mystical culmination of this ancient tradition is solidly based upon the flesh and blood concreteness of the properly functioning human body.

**Raja means king or ruler, and the goal of this form of yoga is to enthrone the Self as the ruler over the senses and sense organs, the most important of which is the mind.**

In the other volume entitled *Raja Yoga*, Sri Sundaram explains how the control over body and mind serves a spiritual end. Raja Yoga is one of the major types of yoga to be developed in India over the centuries and is traced back to the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali in its classical form. Raja means king or ruler, and the goal of this form of yoga is to enthrone the Self as the ruler over the senses and sense organs, the most important of which is the mind. As Sri Sundaram explains it, in each person's search for happiness and bliss, the external world and the mind's involvement with it seem to offer the most promise of fulfillment. But, the joys and pleasures found through the mind are impermanent and fragmentary. There is no end to the desiring, no permanence to the satisfaction, no final relief from the suffering. However,

> "When the Mind is tackled, directly resulting in the control of the Body and the Prana and the Senses, with the goal of transcending the mind, one Travels the path of Raja Yoga. . . . In a sea, it is the wind that causes the waves. In the Ocean of the Mind, the thought waves are caused by the wind called desire and storm called likes and dislikes. Once these causes for the external turmoil of the mind are eliminated then the self remains in the Self, in untarnished Blissful, Ineffable peace. This is a state which cannot be described, but can only be experienced."(page 5)

The specific steps to such an experience are the subject of Sri Sundaram's comprehensive treatment of both the practice and theory of Raja Yoga. Each of the eight limbs or branches of this yoga (Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi) is discussed in several chapters and in such a way that the reader learns the "what" and "why" of yoga, as well as the "how." Clearly stated instructions for purifications, asasnas, pranayama, and meditation enable one to experience directly the impact of this ancient tradition through personal practice. Relying directly on Sanskrit texts of the

yoga tradition, Sri Sundaram includes not only the precise teachings of "the saints and sages," but also the lore and legend which form an inseparable part of the true Indian spiritual experience. From the concrete details of posture and pranayama to the most subtle aspects of meditative consciousness, Sri Sundaram teaches the essence of Raja Yoga as only a realized Indian master could.

Finally, both of these books are refreshingly authentic even to the style of the language and design of the books themselves. Reading them, it is as though one has suddenly discovered the richness and beauty of handwoven and naturally colored Indian cloth after a lifetime of conventional factory-made fabrics. The unexpected variations in interpretation and syntax stimulate the reader in much the same way as poetry does, opening new perspectives on daily experience and fresh insights on eternal truths. ●

ॐ

Spiritual giants are man-making machines;
Human minds are thoughts-making machiines.

**—Swami Sivalingam**

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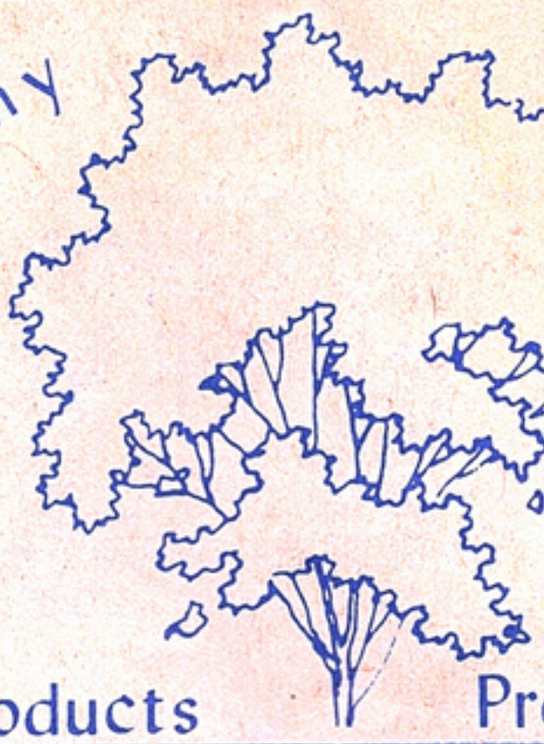

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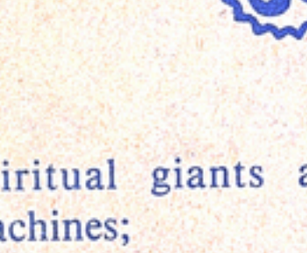
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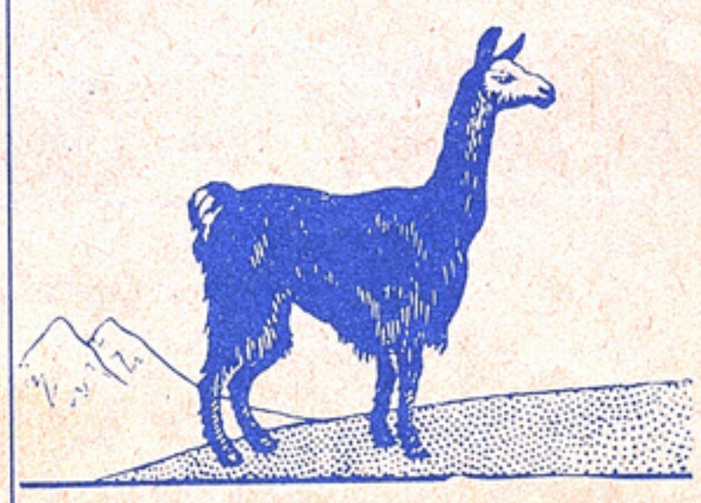
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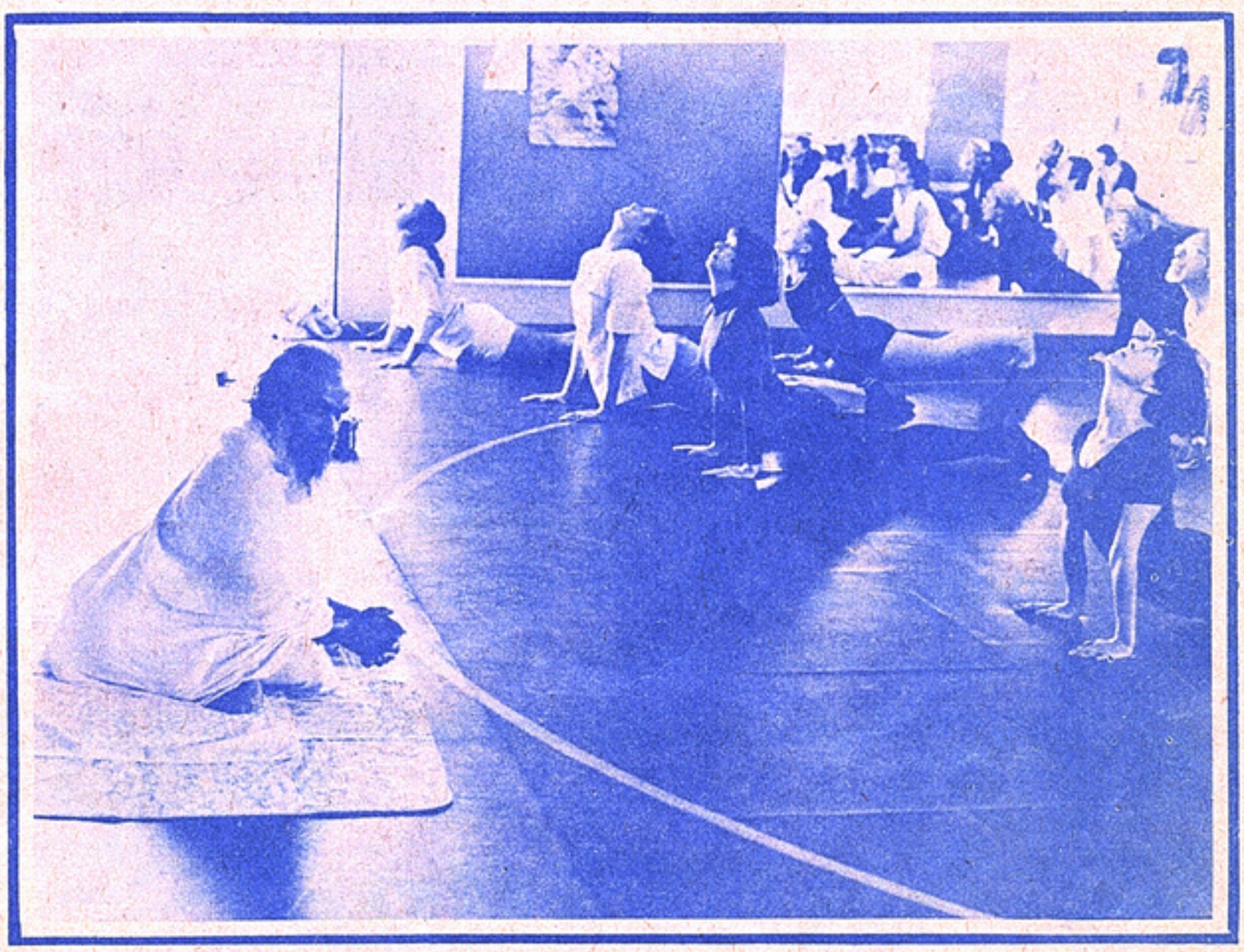
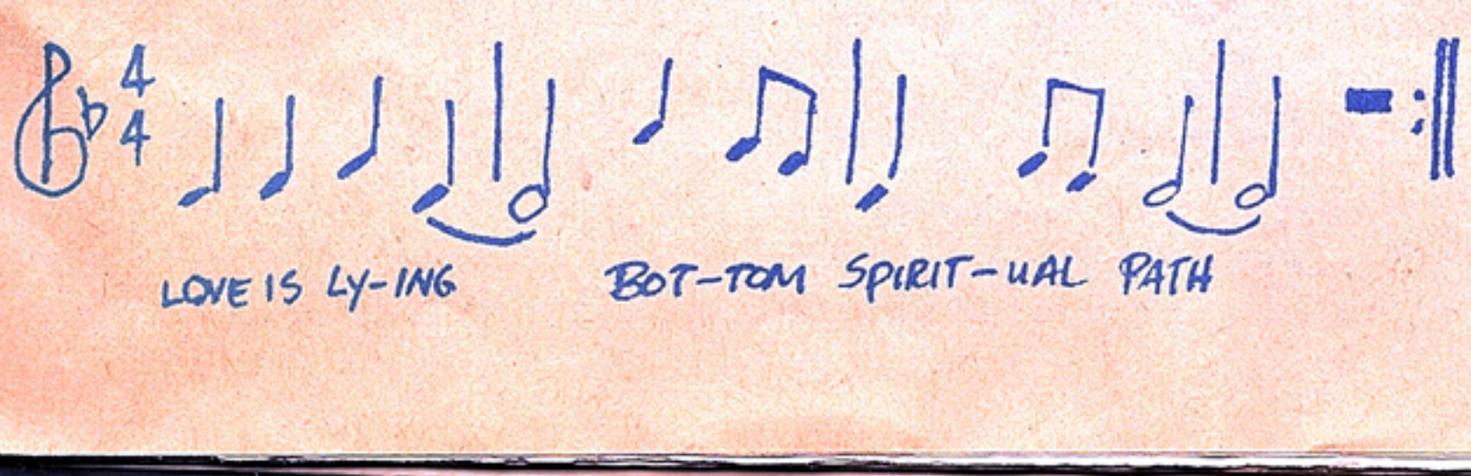
# Swami-ji's Activities

*Swami-ji prepares vegetarian dinner, keenly watched by many, including special guest Sri Yogiraj Evangelos Alexandrou, Founder-Director of the Christananda Ashram in San Jose, California. The occasion was the Anthar Yoga Seminar, November 20, 1977, held at the Prana Yoga Centre, Berkeley, California.*

*Swami-ji (center) shares tea with Rev. Jutaro Hayashi (right), the Reverend's grandson, and Yamuna Devi. The Reverend Hayashi, of Tenrikyo America West Church, a Buddhist temple in San Francisco, visited the Prana Yoga Centre during the Anthar Yoga Seminar on November 20, 1977.*



*Swami-ji conducts a Master Class at the College of Marin in Kentfield, Calif., Nov. 19, 1977. The class was arranged by Ms. Alice Rocky, yoga and dance instructor at the College.*




*A chant for this issue of Prana Yoga Life. Using Swami-ji's words, devotees compose chants during satsang occasions at the Prana Yoga Ashram, Berkeley, California.*

# Conference News and

## *Living with Stress*

On Saturday, October 1, 1977, Bakersfield College sponsored a one-day conference/workshop on living with stress—as a community service for executives, merchants, educators, school board members, nurses, doctors, parents, students, and anyone who might benefit from learning to identify and deal effectively with stress and stress-related problems.

Several hundred people gathered to hear Hans Selye, internationally acclaimed scientist in the field of stress, who was the keynote speaker. Pingala Devi and Prana, devotees of Swami-ji, presented two workshops on the self-management of stress through yoga.

Over one hundred people attended these two workshops and had practical experience of body postures, meditation, and breathing exercises. Participants discussed the benefits of relaxation, suppleness, vitality, and inner peace through attaining physical, mental, and spiritual balance. The workshops emphasized that through regular practice each person learns the proper way to breathe through the nostrils, purify the nervous system, and control the senses—leading to the release of tension, tiredness, insomnia, overweight, headache, constipation, and many other stress-related problems. ●

## *Common Ground*

More than two thousand people gathered from all over the world to attend the fifteenth annual Association for Humanistic Psychology conference, held September 1-5, 1977, at the University of California at Berkeley. *Common Ground* was the conference theme and over two hundred fifty workshops, institutes, and special programs were provided focusing on alternative futures, androgyny, education, transpersonal explorations, the healing journey, and the self and society.

Two programs inspired by the teachings of Swami-ji were offered by prana yoga instructors. Yamuna Devi and Prana, in charge of the Prana Yoga Ashram in Berkeley, conducted an early morning session: Hale, Whole, and Holy Through Yoga. The program combined breathing techniques, meditation, postures, and discussion. Participants experienced the benefits of beginning the day the spiritual practical way, and many commented on how much more flexible, energized, and peaceful they felt at the end of the session.

Pingala Devi, in charge of the Prana Yoga Centre in Berkeley, held a workshop, Yoga for Creative Learning, which emphasized self-development of the learner through meditation, body postures, and breathing exercises. Potential applications of prana yoga theory and practice were also discussed. ●

### Denmark News

Dhairyavathi Devi, in charge of the Prana Yoga Centre in Hellerup, Denmark, is arranging to broadcast lectures by Swami-ji on Danish radio. She is presently translating selected writings by Swami-ji, as well as teaching Prana Yoga classes and doing Prana Yoga counseling for children and adults at the Centre and in outlying districts. ●

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# Notes

## *Spiritual Arts Festival*

Ganeshasan, Marichasan, Headstand with variations, Chadurmuki, and the Sun and Moon were some of the asanas and breathing techniques demonstrated by members of the Prana Yoga Ashram at the Spiritual Arts Festival held November 12, 1977 at the First Congregational Church in Berkeley. Sponsored by the Berkeley Area Interfaith Council, the day-long conference brought together individual visual and performing artists, as well as spiritual groups ranging from Sikh Dharma to Islamic Society to Seventh-Day Adventists. Participating members from the Prana Yoga Ashram included Yamuna, Ambika, Saraswathi, Prem, Athmavathi, Sudharsan, Deivayanai, and Charlie Huard.

Several hundred pages of Swami-ji's transforming "morning flowers," written in ink on soft grey papers in both English and Tamil were on display at the Prana Yoga Ashram exhibit. What a privilege for the passers-by to have the opportunity to witness directly these sacred words from our Guru-ji. On display also were rare yoga books available through the Ashram, as well as beautifully colored fabrics batiked with "Om" signs, which were arranged as a banner above the booth.

"Prana Yoga and Clay" was a workshop led in the afternoon by Ambika Devi, who is in charge of the Prana Yoga Art Centre in Emeryville. Participants practiced stretching, centering, and balancing postures and then after a quiet time of meditation received a cold piece of clay which they worked, warmed, and formed into a very personal pinch pot. Inner experiences from this meditative work with clay led to such comments as "Memories of childhood came to me," and "It's perfect that it's not perfect."

Later in the afternoon, Saraswathi conducted a workshop entitled "Prana Yoga and Sound." Through guided imagery, participants visualized breath sequences at various levels within their bodies. The throat chakra then became the focal point for shared chanting in Latin, English, and Sanskrit. The concluding "Oms" rang very strongly and deeply in the workshop hall. ●

*The Ashram table display at the Spiritual Arts Festival featured Swami Sivalingam's handwritten manuscripts as well as books and materials published by the Ashram.*

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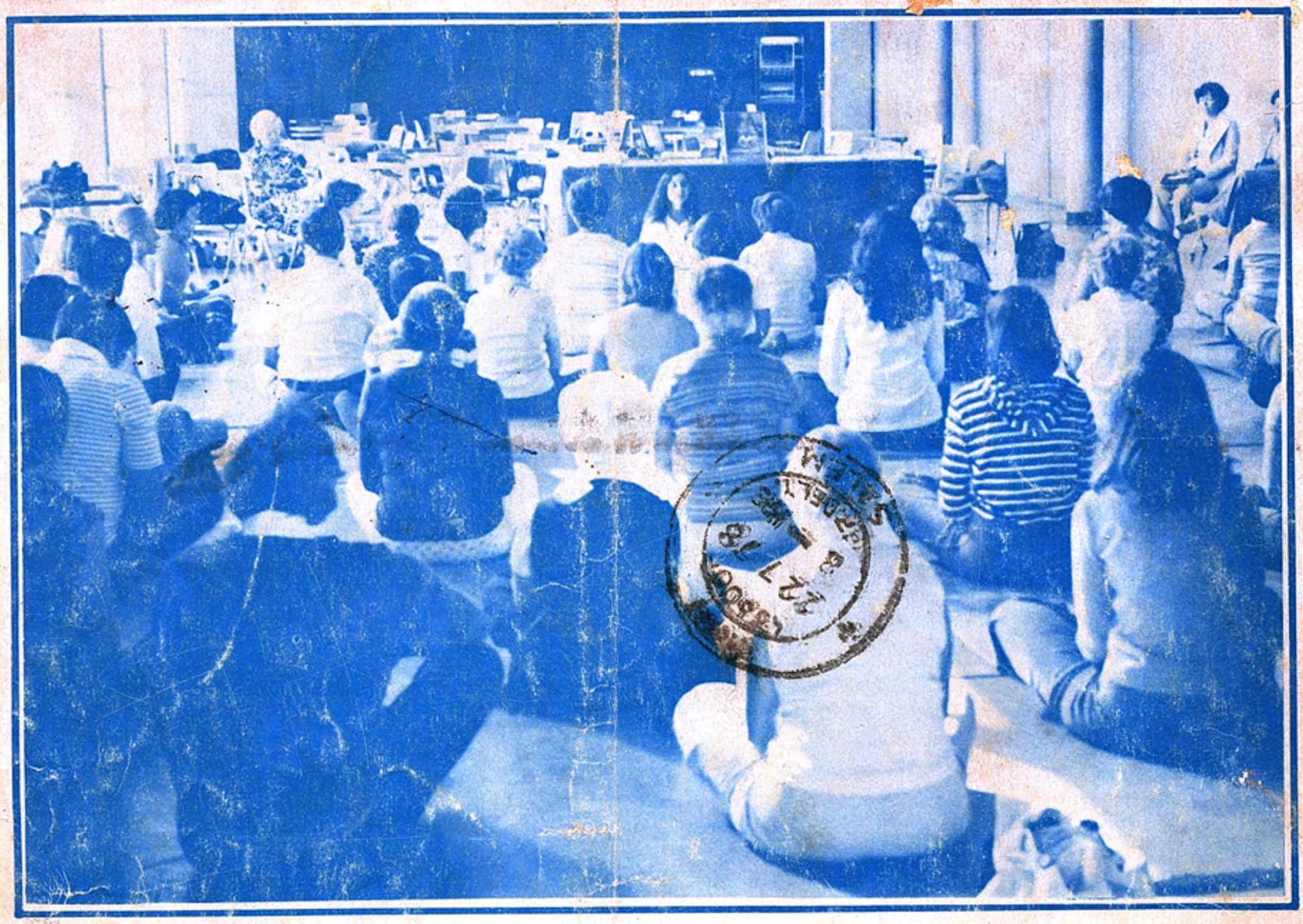

*Participants at the conference/workshop, "Living With Stress," (Bakersfield College of California) practice Prana Yoga with devotees of Swami Sivalingam. (Above, a meditation session. Bottom photo, Prana instructs students in one of the yoga postures, Bavana Muktasan.)*